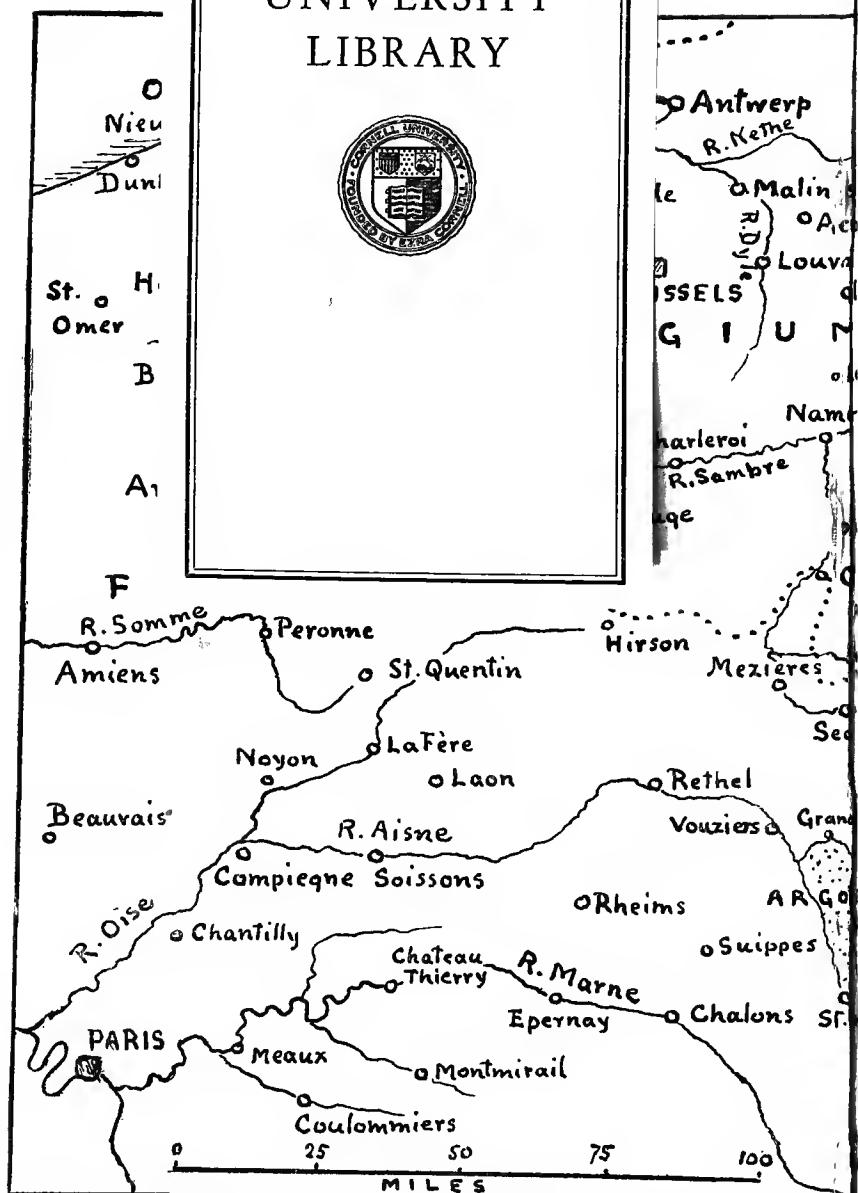
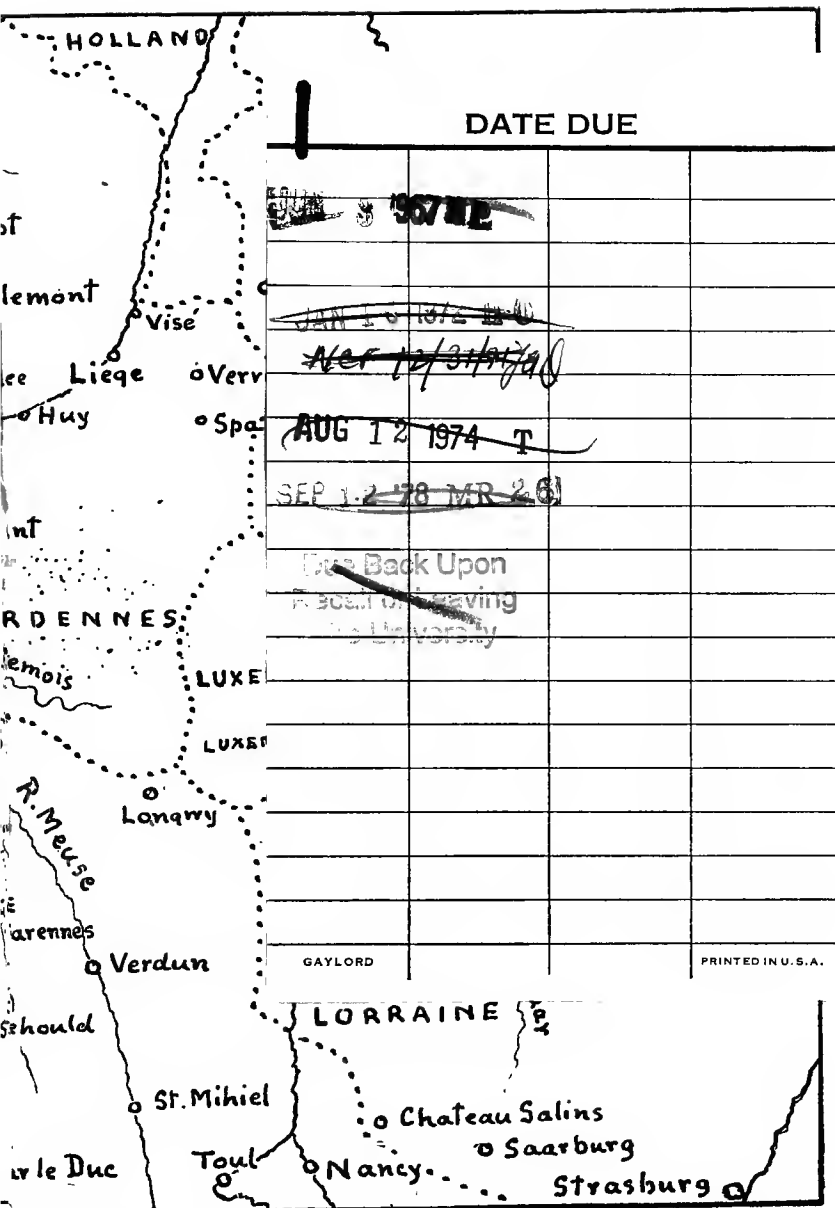


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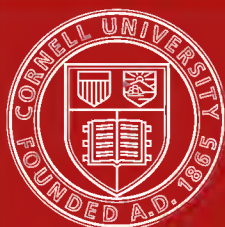


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**A SHORT HISTORY
OF THE
GREAT WORLD WAR**

<i>First published</i>	<i>May, 1919</i>
<i>Reprinted</i>	<i>May, 1919</i>

WINDSOR:
Oxley and Son, Printers to H.M. the King.



A SHORT HISTORY OF THE GREAT WORLD WAR

BY
F. MAYNARD BRIDGE, B.A.

FRONTISPIECE BY HENRY J. FORD

WITH TWENTY-TWO MAPS

*Leut. R. H. H. H.
Paris - Sept 1919.*



LONDON
H. F. W. DEANE & SONS THE YEAR BOOK PRESS LTD.,
31, MUSEUM STREET, W.C.1.,
1919

PREFACE.

At first sight this short history may seem a superfluous addition to the literature of the War. Several exhaustive histories, written by competent authorities, have appeared in numerous parts and volumes, and there are many smaller works dealing with special phases of the war. But there are thousands of people who have not had the time or the opportunity to read these works, many of whom will, perhaps, be glad to have the record of the whole war in a handy form at a moderate price. It may also appeal to repatriated prisoners of war who were only able to follow the course of events through enemy versions, and would like to devote a few hours to reading the complete story. Lastly, there is no doubt that the history and lessons of the Great War will be taught in the schools and colleges of the British Empire, and it is hoped teachers may find this book useful either as a class-book for their pupils or a foundation for their own teaching.

This work does not profess to throw any new light on the war or contain any exclusive information. The accounts of the British operations are chiefly based on the despatches of our Commanders by sea and land. The other parts are compiled from such sources as were available and generally accepted as accurate at the time of writing. By the light of the future, statements may have to be revised and opinions reconsidered.

The sketch-maps are drawn roughly to scale and are not overcrowded with names. If they help the reader to follow the main operations described in the text they will serve their purpose.

F. M. B.

*St George's School,
Windsor Castle.
January, 1919.*

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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE GREAT WORLD WAR.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

The Holy Roman Empire. When the Roman Empire of the West was overthrown by the Goths and Vandals, Central Europe was occupied by various semi-barbaric tribes, continually fighting amongst themselves except when they united to repel a common foe. The most terrible of these invaders was Attila, the "Scourge of God," King of the Huns, who swept westwards across Europe with his devastating hordes till he was routed at Chalons in 451, curiously enough the same spot where the modern Huns were checked and rolled back in September, 1914.

Towards the end of the eighth century Germany was conquered by Charlemagne, King of the Franks. He converted the Saxons to Christianity, and in 800 was crowned Emperor of the "Holy Roman Empire" by the Pope. His dominions were divided after his death, but his successors ruled for about a hundred years, when the German princes took matters into their own hands and chose a Saxon named Henry the Fowler as their King. Thus the Imperial crown became elective, though it was considered hereditary by the Hohenstauffen family, who held it from 1125 to 1254. These Emperors wasted their time and energy in quarrelling with the Pope and invading Italy instead of managing their own affairs, and Germany often fell into a state of anarchy. These feuds lasted for centuries, the supporters of the Pope being known as Guelphs and those of the Emperor as Ghibellines.

The Hapsburgs. About 1257 the number of electors was reduced to seven: the Count Palatine of the Rhine, the Dukes of Saxony, Brandenburg and Bavaria, and the Archbishops of Mainz, Treves and Cologne. Bribery was not uncommon, and in 1273 a Swiss Count, Rudolf of Hapsburg, managed to get himself elected Emperor. He and his sons, after the rough manner of the times acquired Austria and the neighbouring provinces, and their successors, gradually extending their dominions, began to consider the crown their natural heritage; indeed from the time of Albert of Hapsburg (1483), there was an unbroken succession of Hapsburg emperors till the Holy Roman Empire was abolished by Napoleon after the battle of Austerlitz. Since that time the Hapsburgs have had to be content with the title of Emperor of Austria.

The Hohenzollerns. In the twelfth century there was living at Zollern in Suabia a baronial family named Hohenzollern. The head of this family became Burgrave of Nuremburg about 1192. From his son Conrad is descended the Franconian branch of the family (Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen), while another son, Frederick, was destined to become the ancestor of Prussian kings and German kaisers. In 1417 Albert, of the Suabian branch, purchased the Mark of Brandenburg, at that time a bleak and barren wilderness on the shores of the Baltic Sea, and thus became an elector. A hundred years later another Albert of Hohenzollern was Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, engaged in converting the wild Eastern tribes to Christianity, and rewarded himself for his zeal by annexing the province of Prussia, which he held as a fief of Poland. In 1616 Prussia was united to Brandenburg.

The Thirty Years War. In 1618 a terrible war broke out in Germany, called the Thirty Years War. The immediate cause was the elevation of Frederick of the Palatinate, a Protestant Prince, to the throne of Bohemia, a Roman Catholic country. It was to some extent a religious war between the Catholics of the South and the Protestants of the North, but it was really an attempt by the Emperor to strengthen his grip over the northern states. For a long time the Imperial armies, under Tilly and Wallenstein, had it all their own way, and the cause of the Protestant princes seemed hopeless, when a champion appeared from the north in the person of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, who quickly turned the tables on the Emperor. After a brilliant career of victory he was slain at the battle of Lutzen (1632).

France now came in against the Emperor, who suffered defeat after defeat, and had finally to agree to the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) by which the pretensions of the House of Hapsburg were completely crushed. France gained immensely in power and prestige by this war, and Germany was devastated and exhausted. It became possible for Louis XIV., some years later, to realise his ambition of making the Rhine the eastern boundary of France, but he was not so successful in the north, where his schemes for making the Scheldt his northern boundary were thwarted by the Duke of Marlborough's victories in Flanders (1706-9).

Prussia. Frederick William, the "Great Elector," found his heritage laid waste by war, but during his lengthy rule (1640-88) he laid the foundations of the future kingdom. He established a firm and despotic government, freed Prussia from Poland, and annexed all the adjacent lands he could grasp. But he was content to live and die the Great Elector. It was for his son, the vain and incapable Frederick, to aspire to be a king. He bought recognition

from the Emperor, and crowned himself king at Koenigsberg in 1701, to the amusement of Europe. His successor, Frederick William I. (1713-1740) had a mania for military display. He exhausted the resources of his far from wealthy kingdom in collecting and maintaining an army of giants. But he did not go to war; his soldiers were for the parade ground at Potsdam; they were far too precious to be risked in battle. This worthy monarch actually imprisoned his son Frederick because he preferred playing the flute to drilling his father's wonderful soldiers.

Frederick the Great. On ascending the throne in 1740 this same Frederick soon found a use for his father's army. The Emperor Charles VI. died and was succeeded by his daughter, Maria Theresa. Though Frederick had agreed to the "Pragmatic Sanction," which recognised her succession to her father's hereditary dominions, he took advantage of the occasion to seize Silesia. This naturally led to a war with Austria. England supported Maria Theresa, while France helped Prussia. Frederick ran away from his first battle to find that his troops had won a victory in his absence, but he afterwards showed great skill and courage as a general, and at the end of the war retained Silesia. But Maria Theresa was a very determined woman, and Frederick knew that he would soon have another war on his hands, in which the little kingdom of Prussia might have to fight the whole of Europe.

The Seven Years War. This war broke out in 1756. Austria had now got France, Russia, Sweden and some of the German states on her side. England, in those days always opposed to France, helped Frederick, chiefly with money which he badly needed. At first Frederick was successful in several battles, but later fortune turned against him, and it required all his wonderful energy and skill to extricate himself from his difficulties. At last, when Prussia was almost exhausted, the Empress Elizabeth of Russia died, and her successor, Peter III., a warm admirer of Frederick, changed sides. This saved Frederick, and when peace was made he found himself still in possession of Silesia, and he had raised Prussia from a minor state to the position of one of the leading military powers of Europe. He further enlarged his kingdom by the "partition" of Poland with Austria and Russia in 1772. But while he was paving the way for the future German Empire under the leadership of Prussia, England was laying the foundations of the world-wide British Empire, which was to cause Germany so much jealousy a hundred and fifty years later, for it was during the Seven Years War that Clive fought the battle of Plassey, and made British rule supreme in India, and Wolfe's victory at Quebec gave us the dominion of Canada.

Napoleon. Exhausted by war, Europe now had a period of comparative peace till the French Revolution broke out in 1789. One of the causes was the dislike and suspicion of Louis XIV.'s Austrian wife, Marie Antoinette, the daughter of Maria Theresa. The Austrians and Prussians invaded France in 1792 to rescue the King and Queen, but were defeated by the Revolutionary Army at Valmy, and gave up the attempt. From the ashes of the Revolution arose Napoleon. Crowned Emperor in 1804, he invaded Austria in 1805, shattered the Austrian and Russian armies at Austerlitz, and declared that the Holy Roman Empire had ceased to exist. He formed Western Germany into the "Confederation of the Rhine," and made the Electors of Saxony and Bavaria kings to do his bidding. The King of Prussia, who had stood aloof when he might have been of some use, was forced to fight the next year, and met with disaster at Jena. Napoleon then beat the Russians at Friedland, and became master of Central Europe. Austria became restive in 1809, and was again crushed at Wagram. Three years later the destruction of Napoleon's armies in the retreat from Moscow raised the spirits of the Germans, and they determined to throw off his yoke. A big coalition was formed against him, and he was eventually beaten at the battle of Leipzig, and was compelled to retreat. The Allies invaded France, and Napoleon abdicated at Fontainebleau. He escaped from Elba the next year, and after beating the Prussians at Ligny he met the British for the first time at Waterloo, where his career as a conqueror was closed for ever.

Bismarck. In 1830 the French turned their Bourbon king, Charles X., off the throne, and in 1848 got rid of Louis Philippe, the "Citizen King." They set up a Republic with Louis Napoleon (afterwards the Emperor Napoleon III.) as President. This caused serious unrest in other parts of Europe. A struggle for freedom broke out in Hungary, which was suppressed with the help of the Russians, and Italy rose against her Austrian masters. The Emperor Ferdinand thought it wise to abdicate in favour of his nephew, Francis Joseph, then a youth of eighteen. The movement was felt all over Germany, and particularly in Prussia. There was still very little unity in Germany, Prussia was becoming more and more the leader, and Austria was losing influence. A Prussian statesman, Otto von Bismarck, determined to make a united Germany under the control of Prussia, and he carried out his policy of "blood and iron" with extraordinary foresight and firmness of purpose. In 1864 he persuaded Austria to join Prussia in seizing the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein from Denmark. But Austria got no share of the spoils and quarrelled with Prussia, as Bismarck no doubt foresaw. The war which followed lasted only

seven weeks, and ended in the overwhelming defeat of the Austrians at Sadowa (1866). The North German Confederation was now formed by Prussia, but Saxony, Bavaria and Wurtemberg held aloof, and it was clear that another successful war was needed to complete the unification of Germany.

The Franco-German War. Bismarck had no difficulty in finding an opponent. Napoleon III. was badly in need of a successful war to secure his tottering throne, and relying on the mitrailleuse and the chassepot rifle, and false reports of the efficiency of his army, he was misled into believing that he would have a triumphal progress to Berlin. A cause of quarrel was not wanting :—a Hohenzollern prince was a candidate for the throne of Spain ; Napoleon objected, and though the King of Prussia withdrew his support, Napoleon was led on by Bismarck to declare war. This was towards the end of July, 1870. Napoleon left Paris for the frontier, and was unpleasantly surprised to find that the South German states had come in on the side of the Prussians. The French armies were ill-equipped and badly organised, and the strategy of the generals, who knew nothing of each other's movements, was far from brilliant. There was one skirmish on German soil, but three battles were lost in four days and Marshal Bazaine found himself being surrounded at Metz with 150,000 men. He tried to retreat to Verdun, but after fighting the sanguinary battles of Mars la Tour and Gravelotte he had to retire into Metz and stand a siege. The Emperor, who had escaped from Metz just in time, was joined at Chalons by Marshal McMahon, one of his defeated generals, and after much hesitation and loss of time decided to try to relieve Bazaine. He was headed off northwards, and on September 1st was surrounded by the German armies at Sedan. The French fought with desperate valour, but could not break through the ring of steel with which Von Moltke held them in his grip, and to save useless bloodshed Napoleon capitulated with 80,000 men. A republic was proclaimed in Paris and the war went on. Bazaine surrendered at Metz on October 26th. The Germans marched on Paris, which held out till January, 1871. On January 18th the German princes met at Versailles, old King Wilhelm of Prussia was acclaimed German Emperor, and Bismarck's work was accomplished. By the treaty of peace France had to pay an enormous indemnity, and cede the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine to Prussia.

Prosperity of Germany. The remaining seventeen years of Kaiser Wilhelm's reign saw the beginning of great industrial and commercial prosperity in Germany, and a rapid increase in wealth and population. The old Kaiser died in 1888 at the age of ninety,

and was succeeded by the Crown Prince Friedrich, who had married Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, and was a warm friend and admirer of the English. But a fatal disease carried him off after a reign of three months, and his son Wilhelm ascended the throne. All this time Prince Bismarck had guided the ship of state, and from a Prussian point of view he had been eminently successful. An alliance was formed with Russia and Austria, but Russia dropped out after the war with Turkey, and in 1883 Italy joined Germany and Austria as a defensive member of the "Triple Alliance." Bismarck was quite content with Germany's position as the leading military power in Europe. His policy was to keep friendly with England and Russia, and he had no ambition to challenge the supremacy of Britain on the seas. Some colonies were started in Africa in 1884, but they were hardly of sufficient importance to justify the building of a fleet to protect them. The young Kaiser, however, had different views, and in 1890 he abruptly "dropped the pilot" who had weathered so many storms, and appointed a chancellor, Caprivi, who would fall in with his own schemes.

World Power. These schemes aimed at "World Power" for Germany. Millions of pounds were spent in developing African colonies, and the Kaiser looked round the world for other settlements. But he was rather late in the field and found that all the most desirable "places in the sun" were already occupied by other nations, chiefly Britain and France. He did, however, manage to secure some strips of land in Africa, a bit of China, and a few islands in the Pacific. It was hoped that the surplus population of Germany would emigrate to these colonies, but they preferred the freedom of the United States, and so the colonies were hardly a financial success. Wilhelm now wanted a Navy to protect the over-seas commerce of his Empire. He had a hard struggle to get it, but taking advantage of the hatred of England at the time of the Boer War, he persuaded the Reichstag to pass a Navy Bill. Under the direction of Admiral von Tirpitz, and the Kaiser's brother, Prince Heinrich of Prussia, the German Navy grew by leaps and bounds, and caused a corresponding increase of shipbuilding on the part of Britain to keep up the "Two-Power" standard.

The Kaiser also looked with a longing eye on the Ottoman Empire and became very friendly with the Turks. He paid theatrical visits to Constantinople and Jerusalem, and posed as the patron and protector of the Moslem world. He took more than a fatherly interest in the Bagdad Railway, and had visions of a journey from Berlin to Basra in a German train. The defeat of his friends the Turks in the Balkan War of 1912 was a bitter pill for him to swallow, especially as they had been equipped and trained by the Germans.

The Great War Lord. It must not be imagined that, while occupied with these schemes, the Kaiser neglected his army. On the contrary he left no stone unturned to make it the most efficient fighting machine in the world, and lost no opportunity of letting his troops know the Imperial ideas of warfare. Addressing the force sent to China to quell the Boxer Rising in 1900, he exhorted them to be as terrible as the Huns of Attila, and subsequent allusions to the "mailed fist" and "shining armour" provoked more amusement than apprehension in England and France. Nor did he neglect the arts of peace; in music, painting, sculpture and the drama he was the one and only authority in Germany and his opinion was final. His son, the Crown Prince, outdid his father in arrogant militarism and boastfulness, and was looked upon by the "Junkers," or high military caste, as their leader. More than once he was sternly repressed by his parent for his indiscreet remarks. The Kaiser was not then ready for war.

The "Entente Cordiale." England for many years enjoyed a position of "splendid isolation." This was an advantage in some respects, as it did not entail any obligations, but at the time of the Boer War, when a European coalition seemed likely to be formed against us, we realised the disadvantage of having no friends or allies. Thanks largely to the tact and personal popularity of King Edward VII. a friendly understanding was brought about with France. Russia was France's ally, and naturally came into the "entente cordiale." The Germans had no doubt that this was intended as a set-off against their own "Triple Alliance," and the Kaiser went on building battleships faster than ever. He first came up against the Entente when he tried to gain a footing in Morocco, and it was decided by the Convention of Algeciras that he had no business there. He accepted this with bad grace, but in 1911 a German gunboat, the *Panther*, turned up in the harbour of Agadir, and announced its intention of stopping there to protect German interests. This was resented by France (backed up by Britain), as a violation of the Algeciras agreement. Germany at first was obstinate, and war almost broke out, but diplomacy prevailed, and Germany, soothed by a slice of French Congo, withdrew her pretensions to interfere in Morocco.

Russia. It was Peter the Great (1682-1725) who made Russia a great European power. Before his time Russia had only one sea-port, Archangel, on the shores of the White Sea. He extended his dominions to the shores of the Baltic, the Caspian and the Black Sea. The Empress Catharine added the Crimea and part of Poland. Alexander I. was the bitter enemy of Napoleon, and had a large share in his downfall. He afterwards formed the "Holy Alliance"

with Austria and Prussia for mutual support in upholding autocratic government and suppressing rebellions. His successor, Nicholas I., was a deadly foe to the Turks; he held that they had no right in Europe and proposed to bundle them out; in fact he would have done so had not England and Austria arrested his victorious advance on Constantinople in 1826. In 1853 he asserted that the "Sick Man of Europe" was dying, and proposed to share his property with England and France. This kind offer was rejected, and led to the Crimean War; it was Nicholas who died. Another war between Russia and Turkey broke out in 1877, and England again prevented the victorious Russians from marching on Constantinople.

In the early nineties Russia turned her eyes to the Far East; the Trans-Siberian Railway was completed and Port Arthur founded as a naval base (1896). This brought about a conflict with Japanese interests, and war broke out in 1904. Port Arthur fell and the Russian army was finally defeated at the battle of Mukden. The Russian Baltic Fleet arrived too late, and was practically destroyed by Admiral Togo. Our attitude to Russia changed after the Japanese War; for fifty years she had been our most likely enemy, but we now saw that there was more to fear from the hostility of Germany, and so the Triple Entente became possible.

Turkey and the Balkans. The Turks got a footing in Europe about the middle of the fourteenth century, but did not succeed in planting the crescent on Constantinople till 1453. In the sixteenth century, under Solymán the Magnificent, they took Belgrade and Buda-Pesth and laid siege to Vienna. At this time the Hungarians formed the bulwark of Christendom against the Moslems, but later the Russians became even more formidable enemies to the Turks, and have for more than a century regarded themselves as the natural protectors of the Christian subjects of the Sultan and the small Slav states in the Balkan Peninsula. As we have seen, it has only been by the support of other great Powers that Turkey has been able to maintain her position in Europe. In the seventies the atrocities committed by the Bashi-Bazouks in Bulgaria led to a war with Russia, and the defeated Turks had to surrender what little influence they had north of the Balkans. Prince Charles of Roumania, who had materially assisted the Russians in the war, was made king in 1880. Serbia became independent and Prince Milan was made king in 1882. Bulgaria became a principality under Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, and Eastern Roumelia was added to it in 1885.

But Turkish mis-rule still went on, till a party called the "Young Turks" arose and deposed the old Sultan Abdul Hamid in

favour of his brother Mohammed. Ferdinand of Bulgaria took advantage of this revolution to shake himself free from Turkey and proclaim himself Tsar. However, the Balkan States did not like the Young Turks any better than the Old Turks, and in 1912 Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Greece formed an alliance and invaded Turkey. Their arms met with such success that the Turks had to give in and yield considerable slices of territory to each of the allies, but managed to retain Adrianople. Bulgaria was dissatisfied with her share of the spoils, and treacherously attacked her late allies, Serbia and Greece, but got the worst of it. Roumania stepped in and took Silistria from Bulgaria as the price of her interference. The results of the Balkan war were satisfactory to Russia, but not altogether pleasing to Germany and Austria.

Italy. In the middle ages Italy was composed of numerous small principalities and republics, ever quarrelling among themselves or resisting the temporal power of the Popes. Later the Austrians became the dominant power in the north, the Pope in the middle and the Bourbons in the south. Napoleon "freed" Italy for a time, but only to substitute the rule of the French. After his fall the previous government came back into power, and for years the dream of "United Italy" seemed as far from realisation as before. It was not till a patriotic statesman named Cavour took the movement in hand that it promised a chance of success. Victor Emmanuel, king of Sardinia, was the leader and Garibaldi the hero of this movement. Napoleon III. was persuaded to invade Northern Italy, but after defeating the Austrians at Magenta and Solferino he made peace and returned to France (1859). Garibaldi drove the Bourbons from Naples in 1860, and the Austrians evacuated Venice in 1866, but it was not till 1870, on the withdrawal of the French troops from Rome, that Victor Emmanuel was able to enter that city and declare the temporal power of the Pope at an end.

In 1883 Italy, suspicious of France, joined the Triple Alliance as a defensive partner, though she had no reason to like the Germans and openly detested the Austrians. Italy's schemes for founding colonies in North-East Africa were not a success, a severe defeat being suffered at the hands of the Abyssinians at Adowa in 1896. Quick-firing guns were used for the first time in this battle (by the Abyssinians!) In 1911 Italy fought Turkey in Tripoli, when aeroplanes were used for the first time in real warfare.

Belgium. The small kingdom between France and Holland, Flanders as it used to be called, has played an eventful part in European history, and from the numerous battles which have been fought there has been named "The Cockpit of Europe." After belonging to Spain, Austria and France, it was in 1815 united to

Holland. This union was distasteful to the Belgians, and in 1831 they declared their independence. A treaty was drawn up and signed by the great powers, guaranteeing the neutrality of the new kingdom, and this treaty was ratified in 1839 and 1870. A king was found in Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. He was succeeded by Leopold II., who was never popular, but did a lot for Belgium and exploited vast territories in Central Africa known as Belgian Congo. On his death his nephew Albert came to the throne, and in July, 1914, he was ruling peacefully over a densely-populated, prosperous, industrial country.

PART I.—1914.

CHAPTER I.

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR.

Austria and Serbia. While Russia was acting as the champion of the small Slav states and driving the Turks south of the Balkans, a neighbouring power was watching the progress of events with a jealous eye. Austria also posed as the "protector" of Serbia, but the Serbians did not like the Austrians and had good reason to be suspicious of their attentions. After the defeat of the Turks in 1878 Austria took over the management of Bosnia and Herzegovina; there is no doubt that many improvements were effected, but the authorities quite failed to conciliate the inhabitants, who were Slavs and in sympathy with the Serbians. In 1908, taking advantage of the revolution in Turkey, Austria formally annexed these two provinces. Serbia protested strongly, and appealed to Russia, but Austria was powerfully supported by Germany, and Russia, hardly yet recovered from the Japanese defeat, did not feel justified in declaring war.

The situation became more acute after the Balkan war of 1912. A glance at the map will show that fate had been unkind to Austria in the matter of sea-coast; with the exception of the north-east corner of the Adriatic the empire had no maritime outlets, and it had long been the ambition of Austria to push southwards along the coast of the Adriatic, and also to gain a seaport on the Aegean, Salonika for choice. Austria saw with dismay the expansion of Serbia, cutting off the way to Salonika, and took good care that if she could not secure Albania, Serbia should not do so either. The ill-feeling between the Serbs and Austrians was increased to such a degree that only a match was needed to kindle a bonfire which might set Europe ablaze.

Serajevo. This match was struck at Serajevo, the capital of Bosnia, on June 28th, 1914. The Archduke Ferdinand, heir of the aged Emperor Francis Joseph, visited Serajevo on that day to inspect the troops. While driving with his wife through the streets of the town a bomb was thrown into his carriage; he picked it up and threw it out, but it exploded and injured two or three of his staff. On his drive back from the Town Hall another bomb was thrown by a Serbian student, a mere lad, but it failed to explode, whereupon the lad rushed forward and fired three pistol shots, which mortally wounded the Archduke and his wife. The culprits

were arrested and examined ; it seemed clear that the plot had been hatched in Serbia, and the bomb probably obtained from a Serbian arsenal, but it also seemed very unlikely that the Serbian government had encouraged or even had any knowledge of the plot. There was nothing to gain by the death of the Archduke ; he was completely out of favour with the Emperor, and his liberal views were very distasteful to the ruling powers at Vienna. At the end of three weeks the incident seemed almost forgotten, and certainly not of sufficient importance to cause a war.

The Situation. But during those three weeks Austria had been consulting with Germany, and the two allies were taking stock of the situation in Europe, and considering the chances of success in a quarrel with the Triple Entente. It was quite clear that an attack on Serbia would cause Russia to mobilise, and war with Russia meant war with France. The question was "What would Great Britain do ?" The German idea seems to have been that England was too much occupied with Irish troubles to undertake a war. Russia was more powerful than in 1908, but her navy, destroyed in the Japanese war, had not yet been completed. France was occupied with political and army scandals, and in the middle of a scheme for increasing her forces by prolonging the period of service from two to three years. On the other hand Germany was well prepared—two million men perfectly equipped and trained, could be mobilised at once. Large numbers of Zeppelins and submarines had been constructed, and the Kiel Canal enlarged to accommodate the biggest battleships. The military class in Germany was all for war. Germany had been at peace for forty-four years, and only the oldest generals had seen serious active service ; from the Crown Prince to the junior lieutenants the officers were longing to draw their swords and win the Iron Cross. The time seemed ripe. "The Day" had come.

Austria's Note to Serbia. Meanwhile the Austrian newspapers were clamouring for vengeance on the assassins, but as yet there was no war cloud in the sky. Suddenly, on July 24th, Austria sent a "Note" to Serbia, and required an agreement to all the demands it contained within forty-eight hours. There were two clauses to which Serbia could not possibly agree without sacrificing her independence, namely, that Serbian plots against Austria should be investigated by Austrian police, and the plotters tried by a tribunal partly consisting of Austrian judges. Serbia did not absolutely reject these conditions, but asked for an explanation and more time to consider. On July 26th, the Austrian Ambassador was recalled from Belgrade, and three days later the Austrians were bombarding the Serbian capital.

Peace or War? The expected happened. Russia ordered a partial mobilisation of her forces in the south, and it was obvious that unless the differences between Austria and Serbia were quickly settled, the war would spread. Our Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, strove hard for peace; he suggested a conference of the Powers, but Germany would not agree. Germany saw war coming, and played up hard for British neutrality. The German Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, asked Sir Edward Goschen, whether England would remain neutral in the case of war between Germany and France if Germany undertook not to annex any French territory. "What about the French colonies?" asked Sir Edward, but to this the Chancellor would give no assurance. He assured him, however, that in case of an invasion through Belgium, the neutrality of that country would be respected *after the war*! Sir Edward Grey refused these offers and again proposed a conference, without success.

War. On July 31st Russia ordered a general mobilisation. The next morning Germany sent an ultimatum that this should be stopped. No reply was received, and war was declared on Russia the same night. On August 2nd, German troops crossed the French frontier, and Luxembourg, a small neutral state, was occupied, its little army of about three hundred men being too weak to offer any resistance. A large German force was being massed on the frontier of Belgium, but whether the German advance was to be peaceful or not depended on the spirit of the Belgian King and people. The brave King, Albert, determined to resist the violation of his territory, and the demand for a peaceful passage was firmly refused. On August 3rd the German advance guard crossed the frontier. It was now time for Britain to act. We were not bound by a treaty to fight for Russia or France, and so far we had only given France an assurance that we would protect her northern coast if attacked by the German fleet. But we *were* bound by a treaty to fight for Belgium, a treaty which had also been signed and ratified by Prussia, and was now being broken by Prussia. On the morning of the 4th, an ultimatum was sent to Germany; no answer was received, and at eleven o'clock that night we were at war.

Preparations. In only one respect were we prepared for war. Our fleets had been mobilised for a review by the King at Spithead on July 23rd; Mr. Winston Churchill (First Lord of the Admiralty), and Prince Louis of Battenberg (First Naval Lord) had taken steps on August 1st to keep them ready for any emergency, so that our shores were safe from invasion, and we were sure of the command of the sea. But for a continental war on a large scale we were not

prepared. We had neglected Lord Roberts' repeated warnings, and now the time had come. Our numbers looked very small compared with Germany's millions. We had at home an Expeditionary Force of about 120,000 men, a Special Reserve, a National Reserve and a Territorial Force of about 250,000, which was immediately mobilised, whole battalions volunteering *en masse* for service abroad. Lord Kitchener, on his way to Egypt, was recalled and made Secretary of State for War, and to him was entrusted the task of enrolling, equipping and training the New Armies. His first call for 100,000 men was answered in two or three days; then came a call for half-a-million. Enthusiastic expressions of devotion and loyalty and offers of service poured in from all parts of the British Empire. All parties united for the Common Cause, and rallied to the support of their King and Country in the prosecution of the war.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST THREE WEEKS.

German Plans. While the Allies were mobilising, Germany had the advantage of being able to secure the initiative and strike the first blow. For years the German General Staff had been considering another war with France, and it had long been an open secret that the plan most favoured was an invasion through Belgium. The eastern frontier of France, from Luxembourg to Switzerland, offered too many obstacles, natural and artificial, in the shape of the Vosges mountains and the strong chain of fortresses from Verdun to Belfort. By means of their strategic system of railways the Germans were able to mass large armies on the Belgian frontier in a very short time, and by seizing Luxembourg, to gain an important junction of the railways into France. The general outline of the German plan was very simple: a rapid march through Belgium and the north of France before the French had time to mobilise, and Paris would be at their mercy in a fortnight or at most three weeks. Meanwhile the Austrians in the south and a few German divisions in the north could hold the Russians till Germany could fall on them and crush them with her whole strength. Everything depended on the rapidity of the German advance. On the morning of August 3rd two large armies were already massing on the Belgian frontier, under Generals von Kluck and von Bulow. Further south were the Saxon army and the army of the Duke of Wurtemberg. The Fifth Army (under the Crown Prince) was marching on Luxembourg, and the Sixth Army (Crown Prince of Bavaria) was in the Metz district, ready to march on Verdun. Later on a Seventh Army (von Heeringen) appeared in Alsace.

Liège. On August 3rd, the advance guard of von Kluck's army, under General von Emmich, crossed the frontier, and was moving on Liège, the great industrial city of East Belgium. Liège was fortified on the "ring system," that is, a circle of forts at an average distance of four miles from the city. There were six larger forts and six smaller ones between them. They looked like mounds of earth, and the guns were concealed by flattish steel domes, which could be raised or lowered as required. The works had been designed and constructed by General Brialmont, and were amply strong enough to resist the artillery of twenty years ago. The Belgian army was mobilising on the line of the Dyle, a river which flows northwards through Louvain into the Scheldt. It formed a protection for Brussels, and it was hoped to extend the line southwards and link up with the French at Namur. One division was hurried up to Liège, but there was neither enough time nor enough men to form a proper line of entrenchments between the forts, which were more or less isolated. The forts sustained little damage from the German light artillery, and an attack of the German infantry was repulsed by the Belgian regiments, aided by the Civic Guards. But when the enemy brought up their heavy guns two of the forts were destroyed, and as the main body of the Germans was now approaching in overwhelming force, the Belgian field troops were ordered to retire. The city surrendered on the 7th, after a heavy bombardment, but the isolated forts still held out, and delayed the German advance for several days. One by one they were smashed to pieces by the 11in. Howitzers which the enemy had now brought up. General Leman, the brave defender of Liège, was in Fort Loncin, the last to fall. He had sworn that he would never surrender to the Germans, and was only captured when lying unconscious from the poisonous fumes of the shells which had destroyed the fort.

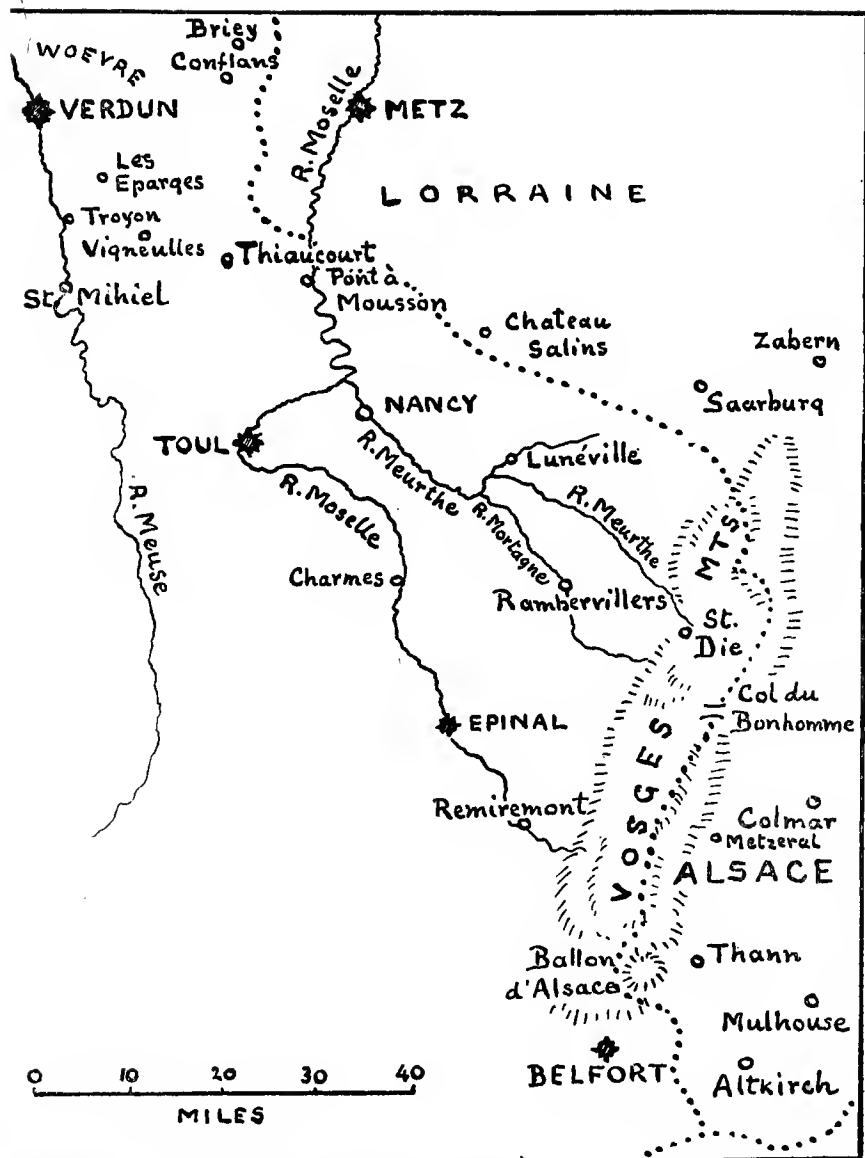
Von Kluck's Advance. Von Kluck had pushed forward a screen of cavalry long before the fall of Fort Loncin. His advance guard proceeded westwards towards the Dyle, and was twice repulsed in the neighbourhood of Haelen, while parties of Uhlans were also routed at Tirlemont and Eghezee, but the cavalry still pressed on and effectually covered the advance of the main body. As German reinforcements arrived the Belgian army was driven back from its position on the Dyle, and retired on Antwerp. The enemy occupied Aerschot, Tirlemont and Louvain, three towns which suffered from a display of "frightfulness" a little later. The Government left Brussels for Antwerp on the 17th, and the capital was now at the mercy of the invaders.

Brussels. It was at first decided to defend Brussels; trenches

were dug, and barricades erected, but as the Germans gave out that they would not recognise the Civic Guard as combatants, the idea was abandoned. The Civic Guard was disarmed, and M. Max, the Mayor, rode out to meet the Germans and escorted them into the city. They marched through the streets with great display and ceremony, but their pompous "goose-step" failed to impress the inhabitants, who, for the most part, remained indoors with the blinds drawn. M. Max made himself responsible for everything, and it was owing to his tact and ready resource that the occupation of the city was accomplished so peacefully and so little damage done. Von Kluck entered Brussels on August 20th. The next day he wheeled southwards to try conclusions with the allied armies which were massing on the frontier to save Belgium or block the way to Paris.

Dinant and Namur. Meanwhile Von Bulow had been advancing up the valley of the Meuse towards Namur. After meeting with some resistance at Huy, he came within reach of the forts of Namur on the 20th. Namur was a "ring fortress" like Liège and General Michel had had plenty of time to put it in a state of defence. He had a force of about 25,000 men, and was expecting the arrival of the French every day. The French were already on Belgian soil, and first came into touch with the enemy at Dinant on August 15th. The Germans had come through the forest of the Ardennes without being noticed, and after a hard fight succeeded in entering the town, but were driven out again by the French. Dinant is one of the most picturesque old towns in Europe, and its beautiful buildings were almost destroyed by the bombardment which followed. The French were too late to save Namur. It was expected to hold out for at least a fortnight, but General Michel was taken by surprise. The German advance was so well concealed that they were able to get their heavy howitzers in position unmolested, and the fate of Namur was sealed.

The Allied Armies. The determined resistance of the Belgians had given France time to mobilise and England time to despatch her Expeditionary Force across the Channel. The allied armies were under the supreme command of General Joffre, and the British Force was commanded by Field Marshal Sir John French, a general who had gained a great reputation in the Boer War, and afterwards held the highest commands at home. It consisted of two Army Corps, under Sir Douglas Haig and Sir H. Smith-Dorrien; a cavalry division (General Allenby), and the 5th Cavalry Brigade (Sir Philip Chetwode), altogether between eighty and ninety thousand men. It had been despatched across the Channel with the utmost secrecy, and had been landed at Boulogne and other



ports between August 9th and 17th. On the 21st it had crossed the Belgian frontier, and was facing northwards towards Mons, forming the left wing of the allied line. It was not the safest position they could have chosen, but the Allies were not playing for safety: other considerations prevailed. Belgium had saved France, and it was up to the Allies to save Belgium. The plan was to use Namur as a pivot, and wheel round to link up with the Belgians at Antwerp. It was now too late to do this without a fight, and everything depended on a victory over the German armies advancing on Mons and Charleroi, and on the ability of Namur to hold out. But before describing the great battle of Mons we must take a look round and see how things had been going on in other areas of the war.

Alsace-Lorraine. Before the war actually broke out the French took the sensible precaution of withdrawing their troops six miles from the German frontier, so that they might not be accused of provoking the Germans to fight. On August 2nd, when squadrons of enemy cavalry crossed the frontier and raided French territory without any warning, the French began to mobilise rapidly, and hurried large forces to the boundaries of Alsace-Lorraine. They did not know then that the main German attack would be made through Belgium, and they had to guard the gap which had been purposely left between Toul and Epinal when those towns were made into fortified camps. Another motive also inspired them: they were longing to regain their lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. On August 7th a French brigade crossed the frontier and occupied Altkirch and Mulhausen, to the great joy of the inhabitants, who hated their German masters and welcomed the French with open arms. But a German Army Corps appeared on the scene, and after an uneven fight, the French had to retire on the 10th.

An invasion in force was now decided on. General Pau, with three army corps (called the army of Alsace) marched on Mulhausen and Colmar. The First Army (Dubail) and the Second Army (De Castelnau) invaded Lorraine. The high-water-mark of this advance was reached on August 19th. General Pau was within a few miles of the Rhine; Dubail had reached Saarburg, and cut the railway from Metz to Strasburg; De Castelnau had crossed the Seille. For five days the French had carried everything before them. But De Castelnau came across the Bavarian Army strongly entrenched at Morhange, and Dubail was attacked by Von Heeringen. The tired French soldiers could make no progress against the howitzers and machine-guns with which the enemy was so well supplied, and after a hard fight a retreat was ordered. By

the 22nd the First and Second Armies were back again in France, putting the Meurthe and the Mortaigne between themselves and the pursuing enemy. General Pau, finding his left wing in the air, had to retire across the Vosges, though a strip of southern Alsace remained in possession of the French.

Russia. The Germans intended to deal with Russia after they had dealt a staggering blow at France. They expected the Russians would take a month or six weeks to mobilise, so they had only got a comparatively small force in East Prussia, three or four corps at the most. But they reckoned without the Grand Duke Nicholas, who had been appointed to the supreme command of the Russian armies. By August 7th the army of the Niemen (under Rennenkampf) was ready to move, and began to cross the frontier near Suvalki, marching westwards towards the important railway junction of Insterburg. About the same time another Russian army, under Samsonoff, invaded East Prussia from Poland, south of the Masurian Lakes. Rennenkampf found the Germans holding a strong position at Gumbinnen. After a day's hard fighting he drove them back on Insterburg, and they finally retired in haste and disorder on Koenigsberg, leaving the railways in the hands of the Russians.

Samsonoff had a more difficult country to traverse, and his progress was slower, but on the 20th he came across two German corps at Frankenau. After a battle lasting two days they broke and fled in different directions, the majority eventually reaching Koenigsberg. This city, the ancient capital of Prussia, was soon afterwards invested and East Prussia seemed to be at the mercy of the Russians. In the south an Austrian army under Dankl had invaded Poland, and gained some success over a Russian army near Zamosc. But two Russian armies (under Russky and Brusiloff) had entered Galicia about August 25th, and were threatening Lemberg, which was covered by the second Austrian army (von Auffenberg).

Serbia. When the Austrians bombarded Belgrade from the north bank of the Danube the city was evacuated, and the Government moved to Nish. Montenegro joined the Serbians and helped them to invade Bosnia, but nothing much was accomplished. The Austrians, after several unsuccessful attempts, managed to cross the Save and the Drina. They took the town of Shabatz, and tried to surround the Serbian army between the Jadar and the Drina. But the fighting went against them, and finding themselves in danger of the fate they had destined for the Serbians, they retired across the rivers, and by August 24th Serbia was cleared of the invaders. The Austrians now announced that

they had "punished" Serbia, and intended to devote all their energies against the Russians in Galicia.

CHAPTER III.

THE RETREAT FROM MONS.

The French Armies on August 22nd. In order to understand what a splendid fight the British army fought at Mons, and the reasons for the retreat to the Marne, it is necessary to know what was happening to the French armies on that fateful Saturday, August 22nd, the day before the battle. We have seen that the French, attracted by the lure of the lost provinces, had invaded Alsace and Lorraine, and had to retreat. General Pau was still in Alsace, but only just. De Castelnau and Dubail, after their defeats at Morhange and Saarburg, were in France again, rallying their troops between the Grand Couronné of Nancy and St. Dié. The Germans were pouring into France, and on the 22nd the important town of Lunéville fell into their hands. The obsolete fortress of Longwy was being besieged by the German Crown Prince, and putting up a gallant resistance. The Third and Fourth French Armies had pushed into the Ardennes and crossed the river Semois. They expected to find eight German corps against them, and came across thirteen. The superiority of the enemy in heavy artillery, machine guns and aeroplane observation told heavily against them, and on the evening of the 22nd these two armies were already in full retreat to the line of the Meuse.

Battle of Charleroi. The Fifth French Army (General Lanzerac) was drawn up on the line of the Sambre from Namur to the west of Charleroi, facing north. There was some fighting with Von Bulow's advance guard on the 21st, and on the morning of the 22nd the battle broke out in full fury all along the line. The town of Charleroi was the scene of many sanguinary struggles. Several times the French were driven out, but it was recaptured by the reckless bravery of the Zouaves and the Turcos. At nightfall the blazing ruins were hardly tenable by either side. The French right was now in serious danger. The Germans had seized the bridges between Charleroi and Namur, and were pouring across the river, while Von Hausen's Saxons, who had come unperceived through the forest of the Ardennes, had crossed the Meuse between Namur and Dinant and were threatening the flank and rear. The retirement of the Fourth Army had left a big gap, and it was no longer possible for the Fifth Army to remain where it was. Meanwhile Namur was at its last gasp. A French division, rushed up to the rescue at the last moment, was too late to save the situation ;

the Germans had got in between the forts, and their big howitzers were pouring a storm of shells on the town itself.

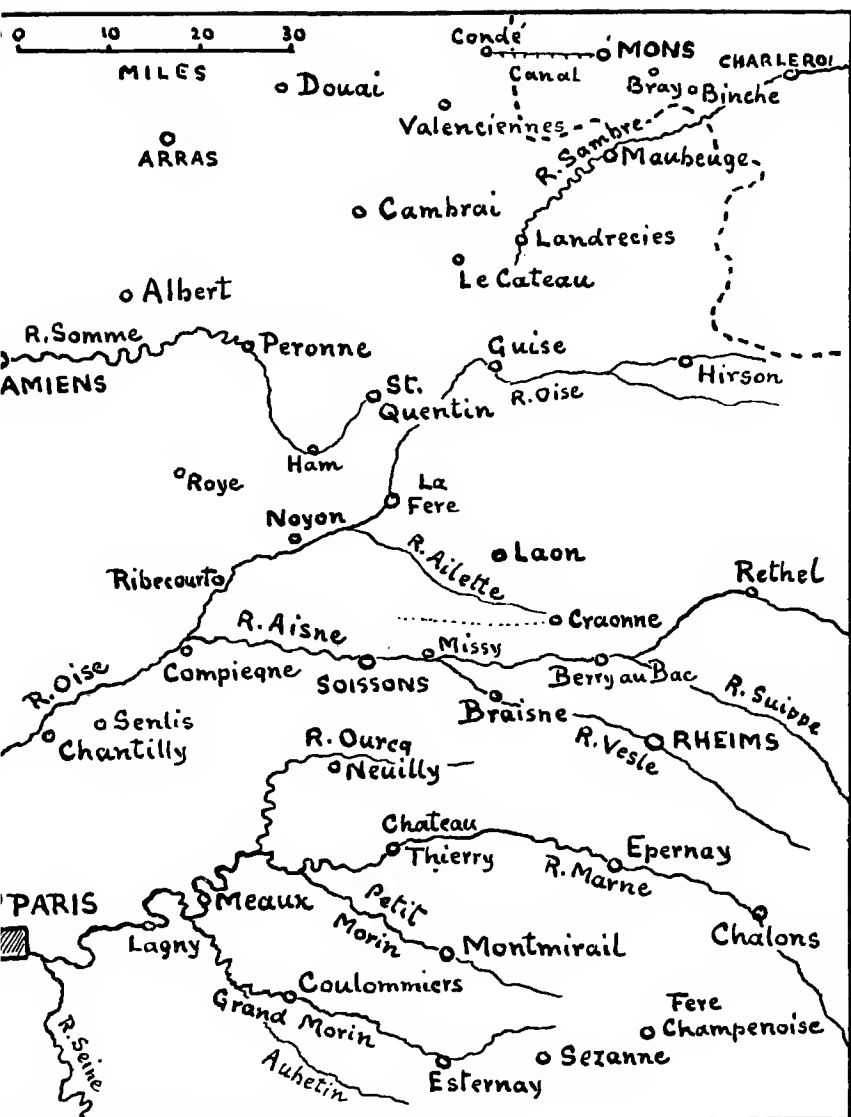
The British Army. On the 22nd of August, while the French were fighting at Charleroi and the forts of Namur were falling, the British army was getting into line in the neighbourhood of Mons. The idea was, in the event of a victory, to wheel round on Namur and link up with the Belgians at Antwerp. As the infantry reached their allotted positions they dug themselves in. The First Corps (Sir Douglas Haig) was on the right, stretching ten miles towards Binche. The Second Corps (Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien) covered Mons, and lined the canal to Condé, twelve miles to the left. The Third Corps had not yet arrived, so General Allenby's Cavalry Division was posted in the rear to act as a reserve. The Fifth Cavalry Brigade (Sir Philip Chetwode) was near Binche and went scouting into the forests in front on the 22nd. They came across patrols of German heavy cavalry, which our Hussars charged and scattered. Sir John French received a message from the French Headquarters that he had only one, or at most two, German army corps against him, and his aeroplane observation bore out this estimate. He was in complete ignorance of the unfortunate fighting on his right, and the British troops went to sleep that night feeling confident of a victory on the morrow.

Battle of Mons. That Sunday morning, the 23rd of August, passed quietly; the inhabitants went to church as usual, and the soldiers were busy washing their shirts and socks and preparing their dinner as in time of peace. Suddenly, about one o'clock, there was a roar of guns, and shrapnel shells began to burst over our lines. Enemy aeroplanes flew over and dropped smoke balls to give the guns the range. Our men lined the trenches ready for the expected attack, but for a long time no Germans could be seen. At last field-grey masses of infantry could be seen issuing from the woods, coming on in dense columns against our lines. At seven hundred yards our men opened fire, and the columns were mown down like hay. Others came up in support to meet with the same fate. They fired their rifles from the hip, which moved our men to mirth and sarcastic remarks, but we suffered heavily in the shallow trenches from shrapnel and the numbers of the machine guns which the enemy had now got into play. The field-grey masses still came on under cover of piles of their own dead, and as they approached our trenches our men leapt at them with the bayonet. With this weapon there was only one side in it; and a full revenge was taken for our sufferings from shrapnel and machine guns. But the enemy's supports seemed endless; they still poured out of the woods by the thousand, and it was obvious that

we were heavily outnumbered. Chetwode's cavalry had to retire from Binche, and Sir Douglas Haig drew his right back to Bray, so that the First Corps was almost at right angles to the Second. This left the Seventh Brigade, which was holding the loop round Mons, in a dangerous salient, but the Wiltshires, South Lancashires, Worcesters and Royal Irish Rifles hung on like grim death till the evening, when they—or what was left of them—were ordered to retire. The attack, which in the early stages was mainly directed against the First Corps, now began to develop along the Condé Canal, and became so severe that the Second Corps had to retire to the south bank. Many heroic deeds were performed by our Engineers in destroying the bridges, and our artillery played havoc with the Germans as they tried to cross by pontoons.

At five o'clock, when the battle was at its height and the British were firmly holding their ground all along the line, Sir John French received a most astonishing message from General Joffre. It told him that Von Kluck was attacking his front with three corps, while another was trying to outflank his left; that the Germans had crossed the Sambre and Namur had fallen: that the French army was in full retreat, and Von Bulow was threatening his right. He was asked to conform to the French retreat. There was no alternative; we were hopelessly outnumbered and in danger of being surrounded. The Third Division was withdrawn south of Mons, where the Middlesex Regiment and the Royal Irish were surrounded and almost wiped out, but the survivors fought on till the Gordon Highlanders came to their help. And so the battle raged till nightfall; in fact, the fighting went on all night, and our weary men got little rest. }

The Beginning of the Retreat. At dawn came the order for the retirement. It was a bitter disappointment for our men, who were eagerly expecting the order to advance. When pressed by the enemy a whole army cannot retreat at the same time. One half has to fight while the other half retires. The fighting part first fell to the lot of the First Corps; the First Division made a feint attack on Binche, supported by heavy artillery fire, to occupy the attention of the enemy and cover the retirement of the Second Corps. Smith-Dorrien halted some five miles back, and kept the Gerinans at bay while Haig retired towards Maubeuge. The enemy tried to outflank Smith-Dorrien's left, and General De Lisle's cavalry brigade went to the assistance of the Fifth Division. The 9th Lancers and 18th Hussars made a great charge till held up by barbed wire, and Captain Francis Grenfell won the Victoria Cross for his heroic example in rescuing a battery of guns. That night the Germans pressed heavily on our left, and Sir John French



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Mons to the Marne.

saw that their plan was to force him into Maubeuge. But he had no faith in fortresses, and decided to continue the retreat, and put a river between himself and the Germans.

Next day welcome reinforcements arrived; the Fourth Division of the Third Corps came up from Le Cateau, and General Snow was directed to strengthen the left flank, where the fighting was particularly severe. Sir John had asked General Sordet, who had three French cavalry divisions in the neighbourhood, for support, but he replied that his horses were too fatigued to move. That evening the First Corps reached Landrecies, and the Second Corps arrived at Le Cateau.

Landrecies and Le Cateau. The Commander-in-Chief had given orders that the retreat was to be continued without stopping to engage the enemy, but nevertheless the little towns of Landrecies and Le Cateau gave their names to historic fights. The Guards Brigade reached Landrecies at 9.30 p.m., and absolutely worn out with fatigue, dropped down to get a little sleep. But there was not much rest for them that night. It was very dark and raining. At ten o'clock firing was heard. Large numbers of Germans had come through the Forest of Mormal, and approached our outposts unperceived. The weary Guardsmen sprang to arms, and met the Germans pouring into the main street of the little town. A desperate struggle went on till long after midnight by the light of the blazing houses. The Germans were finally cleared out at the point of the bayonet, leaving a thousand dead and wounded behind them, and at dawn the Guards resumed their weary march.

The fight at Le Cateau was on a larger scale; it was a pitched battle. When day broke Smith-Dorrien found himself attacked by three German army corps—it was impossible to retreat without a fight. Shells from five hundred guns were dropping on his lines, 100,000 infantry were advancing against his front, and the enemy cavalry were outflanking his left. The battle raged all the morning, and well into the afternoon, when our infantry began their retirement, covered by the devoted artillery. Some of our officers fought to the last gun, with only three or four men left to serve it. In their turn the battered guns were withdrawn under cover of brilliant charges by Allenby's cavalry and Chetwode's brigade; they went through the enemy like "brown paper." The retreat was continued far into the night, unmolested by the Germans, who had suffered too severely to press the pursuit. Sir John French, in his despatch pays a high tribute to the "coolness, intrepidity and determination" of General Smith-Dorrien, and the Second Corps certainly proved itself worthy of such a commander.

From the Somme to the Marne. Two long hot days of weary marching followed, and Sir John French put the Somme and the Oise between his retreating army and the Germans. There were two fine cavalry actions south of the Somme, when Gough's brigade charged and routed the Uhlans of the Guard, and another strong column of heavy cavalry was put to flight by Chetwode's brigade. Our men, who could not understand the reasons for the continued retreat, kept asking "Where are the French?" This question was answered when General Sordet's cavalry divisions, recovered from their fatigue, appeared on the scene and rendered useful assistance, while a corps of Territorials, under General D'Amade, relieved the pressure on our left.

On the evening of the 28th we came into touch with the French Fifth Army on the Oise. The pace of the retreat was beginning to tell. Many men had dropped down, exhausted by fatigue, and fallen into the hands of the enemy. Two battalions disappeared *en masse*. The 1st Gordon Highlanders took a wrong turn in the darkness and marched right into the midst of the Germans; they thought they were the French, and it was not till they were surrounded and assailed by a murderous fire that they discovered their mistake. Near Guise, on the extreme right, the order to retire failed to reach the Munster Fusiliers. They remained where they were, and resisted the enemy onslaught till they were nearly wiped out.

On the morning of the 29th the British force occupied a line from Noyon to La Fère, and it was hoped that the retreat was at an end, but Sir John French received a visit from General Joffre, who requested him to retire on Compiègne. This retreat was effected while the French fought a successful action with the enemy, but as things were going badly farther east, a further retirement was ordered to the Marne. This was not accomplished without severe fighting. In the woods at Nèry, "L" Battery R.H.A. fought its immortal action to the last gun and the last three men (who were awarded the Victoria Cross), and at Villers-Cotterets the Guards Brigade fought something like a pitched battle against superior numbers of the enemy. On September 3rd the British forces crossed the Marne, blowing up the bridges behind them.

End of the Retreat. This was a very anxious time for the Allies. The German right was now at Chantilly, 25 miles from Paris, and patrols of Uhlans got within 12 miles of the capital. The Government was removed to Bordeaux, and General Gallieni, the Governor, was making strenuous preparations for the defence of the city. Lille, Arras and Amiens had been occupied by the enemy, and Sir John French, seeing his communications with the

Channel ports in danger, formed a new base at St. Nazaire, on the Loire. But there was a brighter side to the picture; two new French armies had been formed; the Sixth (General Manoury) north of Paris, and the Ninth (General Foch), which was to fill the gap between the Fourth and Fifth Armies. On September 5th the British army was across the Grand Morin, retiring on the Seine, prepared to put the last of the big rivers between themselves and the enemy. On our right the French were south of the Petit Morin, and Chalons, the Aldershot of France, had fallen to the Germans. But this was the limit of the great retreat; the hour had come, and the weary troops, after fourteen days of retiring and fighting in the blazing heat, were at last to face about and hurl the invaders back.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MARNE AND THE AISNE.

The French Armies on September 6th. To understand the Battle of the Marne we must first follow the movements of the French armies during the retreat from Mons, and note their positions on September 6th. It was the splendid stand made by Dubail and De Castelnau between Nancy and the Vosges which made the Battle of the Marne possible. Part of the German plan was to invade France through the gap, or "trouée" between Toul and Epinal, and so enclose the French armies, as it were, in a pair of pincers. The attempt was made on August 23rd, but Dubail's army stood firm at the Trouée de Charmes and De Castelnau resisted attack after attack on the Grand Couronné of Nancy. Thus the right flank of the French armies was in safe keeping on September 6th. General Sarrail had entrenched his right wing round Verdun, but the Third Army had been driven back by the Crown Prince through the Argonne till it was almost facing west and was fighting with its back to De Castelnau's army at Nancy. Verdun was almost, but not quite, surrounded, and this explains why the Kaiser went in person to take Nancy on September 6th, so that he might join his eldest son on the other side of the Meuse. The Fourth Army had retreated through Rethel, and was now many miles south of Chalons. The new Ninth Army came next, under General Foch, who had lately commanded the crack corps of the French army at Nancy. Then came the Fifth Army, now under General D'Espèry. North of Paris was the newly formed Sixth Army, under General Manoury.

Battle of the Marne. On September 4th Sir John French's aviators brought him surprising news. They announced that

Von Kluck had suddenly stopped his march on Paris, and wheeled round in a south-easterly direction. Early the next morning large enemy columns were observed crossing the Marne at various spots and marching across the front of the British Army. His idea was, no doubt, to ignore the little British force and outflank the French. But General Joffre thought otherwise. He told Sir John French that the retreat was now over, and requested him to turn about and wheel his left up to Meaux, to link up with the Sixth French Army north of the Marne. The offensive was to begin at dawn the next day. The German advance must have been very rapid, for that night their patrols had reached Coulommiers on the Grand Morin, and Montmirail on the Petit Morin. Von Bulow and the Saxons were advancing south of Epernay and Chalons, and the Duke of Wurtemberg had got past Vitry on the Upper Marne.

Early on the morning of Sunday, September 6th, the great battle began all along the line. Von Kluck's patrols, pushing on towards the Seine, were driven back on the main columns, and about noon he began to realise the danger of his position, and fell back on the Grand Morin. Next day he was driven out of Coulommiers, and across the river. The British cavalry charged and routed nearly twice their number of the enemy, the 9th Lancers and 18th Hussars earning special praise from the Commander-in-Chief. On the 8th we advanced to the Petit Morin, driving the Germans before us, while D'Esperey's army recaptured Montmirail. Meanwhile the French Sixth Army, reinforced by troops rushed up from Paris in taxi-cabs and motor buses, was advancing on the Ourcq, and threatening Von Kluck's flank and rear. The Germans were soon recrossing the Marne with all possible haste, closely pursued by the British and French. On the 9th we crossed the Marne, not without considerable opposition; at La Ferté the 4th Division had to build a bridge under heavy fire, and suffered severely. D'Esperey's army crossed at Château Thierry. Von Bulow was caught up by General Foch on the marshes of St. Gond, and fell back rapidly on Epernay. Langle advanced on Chalons, but Sarrail was still held up by the Crown Prince south of the Argonne.

On the 10th the British and most of the French were across the Marne in full pursuit of the retreating Germans. Numbers of prisoners were taken, but the retreat had been carefully planned, and never became a rout. Our troops were now passing through the towns and villages which had been occupied by the enemy, and saw with indignation the wanton destruction which had been perpetrated by the "Bosches." The weather had now turned very cold and wet, and the men regretted their great-coats which they had thrown away in the hot days of the retreat from Mons.

Battle of the Aisne. On the 11th our advance cavalry arrived at the Aisne, and next day the big battle began which lasted for a week before it settled down into trench warfare. The Germans were already crossing the river, destroying the bridges behind them. They held Soissons in force, but were driven out by our Fourth Division (General Pulteney) and the French. Manoury's army was on our left from Soissons to Compiègne, while we advanced on a line of about fifteen miles east of Soissons. We did not know at the time that the enemy were retiring to such carefully prepared positions among the woods and chalk pits on the north bank of the Aisne, and we hoped to cross the river and continue the pursuit. Allenby's cavalry drove the Germans across the Vesle, and prepared the way for the advance of the First and Second Corps.

The crossing of the Aisne began the next morning. All the bridges had been destroyed except the one at Condé, which was held by the enemy. Our engineers worked heroically repairing the broken bridges and constructing pontoons under a deadly artillery fire, but most of the First Division crossed in rafts and boats. One brigade crossed in single file along the submerged girder of a broken iron bridge, but the rest of the Second Division remained on the south bank that night. Smith-Dorrien's Corps crossed at Missy, but owing to tremendous howitzer fire, Pulteney's division had to abandon their attempt at Soissons. By the 14th, however, we had made good our footing on the north bank all along the line. Sir John French was now anxious to find out what the enemy intended to do, so the First Corps pushed forward to the "Chemin des Dames," and came up against a strongly fortified position and a determined resistance. A sugar refinery was obstinately defended, and eventually stormed and carried by the Loyal North Lancashires. Haig pushed on, and after desperate fighting reached the top of the plateau, but as the French on his right had to fall back he could not continue to advance. Allenby's cavalry, acting as infantry reserves, came to his support, and he entrenched the positions he had won. Our other divisions stormed the heights, but finding no protection against the deadly machine gun fire and the high explosive shells from the howitzers which the Germans had brought up after the fall of Maubeuge, they had to retire to the lower ground. Welcome reinforcements appeared on the 16th, in the shape of the Sixth Division, which completed Pulteney's Third Corps.

Trench Warfare. By the 18th it was obvious that the positions held by the enemy could not be carried by a frontal attack with our limited numbers, so there was nothing to do but to construct a similar line of trenches and dug-outs on our side, proof against the high explosive shells which were working such havoc. It had

been wet and stormy since the advance from the Marne, and the conditions were anything but pleasant; but our cavalry cheerfully acted as reliefs to the wearied infantry in the trenches, and the arrival of four heavy howitzer batteries made it possible for us to reply to the German big shell-fire. Violent attacks and counter-attacks were frequent, without much gain to either side. The enemy then tried sapping up to our lines, and rushing our trenches from very close quarters, but met with little success, and after a futile assault along the whole line on September 28th, their efforts slackened. Evidently the fighting on the Aisne had come to a deadlock; it will be interesting now to follow the formation of that wonderful entrenched battle-front which, within a month, was to reach from the North Sea to the frontier of Switzerland.

Rheims. The German line crossed to the south of the Aisne at Berry-au-Bac, where it was up against the French Fifth Army. General Foch had driven Von Bulow out of Rheims and across the Suippe, but the latter was reinforced, re-crossed the river, and planted his big guns on the heights north-east of Rheims. About the 18th a terrific bombardment of the city was begun, which lasted for several days. The chief target was the grand old cathedral, one of the glories of France, and the crowning-place of her kings for six hundred years. Although it was used as a hospital for wounded Germans, and flew the Red Cross flag, its beautiful carvings and stained-glass windows were smashed to pieces, and the roof became a mass of blazing wood and molten lead, but the statue of Joan of Arc, as by a miracle, remained untouched. A particularly violent bombardment on September 28th roused the French to fury, and they charged the enemy off the heights, but the cathedral still suffered from the long range guns when the Germans were in a specially frightful mood.

Verdun and Nancy. From Rheims the entrenched line extended eastwards through the Argonne and formed a salient round Verdun, the corner-stone of the French defence; it then turned southwards through the plain of the Woevre, where the Bavarians were facing the heights of the Meuse. The Germans were particularly anxious to seize Verdun, as it controlled the railway line from Metz to Paris, but General Sarraill, determined that the fortress should not share the fate of Liège and Namur, had pushed out a strong line of entrenchments and earthworks far enough to keep Verdun out of range of the German guns. The Bavarians were held up by the Heights of the Meuse, but about September 22nd pushed forward a wedge as far as St. Mihiel on the Meuse, and kept up a hot bombardment of Fort Troyon, which a fortnight earlier had been shelled by the Crown Prince from the west bank of the river. But

the Crown Prince was now far away in the Argonne; he made desperate efforts to break through Sarraill's army and complete the circle round Verdun, but though he sacrificed thousands of men he was not only foiled in his attempt, but was driven back north of Varennes.

De Castelnau had gained a crowning victory on the Grand Couronné of Nancy. "Nancy must be taken at any cost," said the Kaiser, on September 7th; and he was on the spot himself to encourage his troops and to witness the assault. For three days the Bavarians hurled themselves against the heights, and were mown down in thousands by the accurate fire of the French 75's; the White Cuirassiers of the Guard met with a similar fate. Then the French themselves charged down the slopes and drove the enemy back for several miles. At the same time, south of Nancy, the French armies advanced, put the Germans to flight, and rescued the towns and villages on the Mortaigne and the Meurthe, which had suffered so cruelly during their three weeks occupation by the enemy.

The Northward Line. When General Joffre realised that the frontal attack on the Aisne was held up, he formed the plan of enveloping the German right. Manoury's army was reinforced and pushed northwards from Compiègne. But the Germans foresaw the possibilities of this move, and as fast as the French extended their line they sent troops from the Aisne to keep up with it. The movements soon developed into a race to the north. Amiens, Arras and Lille had been evacuated by the Germans after a temporary occupation, but at this time there was nothing much in the way to protect them from re-occupation, nor, indeed, to bar the way to the English Channel. General de Castelnau, having completed his great work at Nancy, was put in command of a new army, and took position from Roye to the Somme, not without a big fight near Albert. He was just in time to prevent Manoury from being outflanked. Another army was formed at Amiens, under General Maud'huy, and pushed north of the Somme, but soon found itself up against Von Bulow, who had been moved from the Aisne. Another danger was threatening. German columns were moving south-west from Belgium, and it became not only a question of saving Lille, but of extending the line to the sea and saving the Channel Ports. Maud'huy's line had reached La Bassée, not far from Lille, and now Sir John French proposed to General Joffre that the British Army should be moved from the Aisne, where the trench warfare seemed likely to last for months, and take up the difficult task of foiling the German schemes between La Bassée and the sea. Joffre agreed to this, and on October

3rd, French troops began to relieve the British in the trenches, and the Second Cavalry Corps (Gough) was entrained for La Bassée. The others gradually followed, and by October 19th, the First Corps, the last to leave, had arrived at St. Omer, the new Headquarters.

CHAPTER V.

EAST PRUSSIA AND GALICIA.

East Prussia. While the Germans were hacking their way through Belgium and Northern France, the news from the Russian front was distinctly comforting and cheerful. Rennenkampf was investing Königsberg, and his Cossacks were scouring the country towards Dantzic; Samsonoff, leaving the Masurian Lakes behind him, was advancing towards the Vistula with an army of 200,000 men. In certain ill-informed circles it was confidently asserted that the Russian "steam roller" would reach Berlin within three weeks. Towards the end of August these optimistic reports ceased—there was a silence—then a curt paragraph appeared in the papers that the Russians had received a "check." No details appeared for some time, but when the truth gradually leaked out, it was realised that this "check" was a disaster of the first magnitude. It was brought about as follows:

Von Hindenburg. East Prussia was the happy hunting ground of the Kaiser and his nobles; Königsberg was the sacred city of the Hohenzollerns, and this invasion of their ancient domains was particularly distasteful to the Court Party and the upper military class. When peasants came flocking to Berlin with exaggerated stories of the dreadful Cossacks, it was resolved that the Russians must be driven out at any cost. Now there was living at Hanover an elderly retired general named Von Hindenburg, who had made a life-long study of East Prussia; he had often commanded there in manoeuvres and knew the Masurian Lakes by heart; every track and swamp in that region of marshes and forests. His opportunity had now come, and he was appointed to the chief command. Reinforcements were rapidly sent up, and on August 25th he was blocking Samsonoff's way between Allenstein and Soldau, with an army of 150,000 men and a well-conceived plan for Samsonoff's destruction.

Battle of Tannenberg. The great battle began on August 26th, and lasted for six days. Success had made Samsonoff overbold. He was in a marshy country, with the Masurian Lakes behind him, and his columns widely separated, but he thought he could easily brush aside all opposition and continue his advance

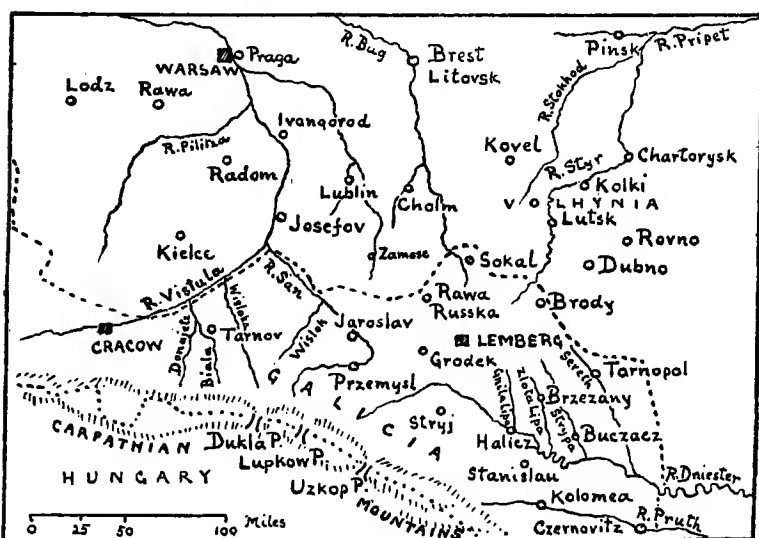
on the Vistula. On the first day he made a fierce attack on the Germans, but Hindenburg drove in his left wing and cut off his one line of retreat via Soldau. Samsonoff had to weaken his centre to strengthen his left; next day his centre was driven in, and Hindenburg turned his right from Allenstein. For two days Samsonoff fought desperately to save his army, which was being enveloped and driven back on the marshes. On the 30th a retreat commenced, which soon became a rout. Samsonoff himself was slain with several of his generals; thousands lost their lives in the treacherous swamps, and the Germans claimed 90,000 prisoners. Less than a third of the Russian army escaped by the one narrow track to the east. Great was the jubilation in Berlin; Hindenburg became the hero of the hour, and was made a Field-Marshal.

Fighting on the Niemen. When Rennenkampf heard of this disaster he lost no time in leaving Koenigsberg and hastening towards the frontier, closely pursued and harassed by the Germans. Hindenburg captured Suwalki, and though the Russians turned at bay and fought an action at Augustova, they did not rest till they had put the Niemen between themselves and the enemy. The Germans reached the Niemen on September 21st, but their efforts to cross were unsuccessful. They then shelled the Russian trenches and made another attempt. But all their bridges were again smashed up by the Russian guns. At the end of a week Hindenburg decided to retire. Rennenkampf now had the satisfaction of chasing the Germans. He caught them up at Augustova, and after a battle lasting several days they were routed with a loss of 60,000 prisoners. Hindenburg now drew off his beaten forces to the Masurian Lakes, where he received strong reinforcements and took up a previously prepared position of exceptional strength. Rennenkampf, finding him so strongly posted on his favourite battleground, wisely refrained from pressing his advantage any further.

Lemberg. It will be remembered that a large Austrian army under Dankl had invaded the south of Poland about the middle of August, and Ivanoff was retiring before it. Two Russian armies under Russky and Brusiloff had entered Galicia and were threatening Lemberg, which was covered by Auffenberg's army. Brusiloff approaching from the south-east, captured Tarnopol and Halicz; then, turning northwards he drove back Auffenberg's right wing. Russky had commenced a turning movement on the Austrian left, while his lieutenant, Dmitrieff, attacked the centre. The battle began on the last day of August. Auffenberg's army was driven into the shape of a crescent, and after four days' hard fighting retired in full flight to Grodek, closely pursued by Brusiloff. The

Russians were now masters of Lemberg, where they were welcomed by the Slav inhabitants. They had taken 100,000 prisoners, several hundred guns, and immense quantities of war material. Lemberg was given its ancient name of Lwow, and it may be mentioned here that from the September 1st St. Petersburg was to be known as Petrograd.

Rava-Russka. Brusiloff now marched on Stryj, and Dmitrieff on Grodek. Russky had driven a wedge between the two Austrian armies, and was now able to turn his attention to Dankl in Poland. The latter had been joined by the Archduke Joseph Ferdinand,



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Galicia.

and the three Austrian armies now formed a big curve from the Vistula to Rava-Russka and Grodek. Dankl attacked Ivanoff, but got the worst of it, and was hurled back on Russky, who completed the victory at Rava-Russka. Auffenberg shared Dankl's defeat. There was another big haul of prisoners and guns, and the scattered armies sought shelter in fortified towns. Some did not halt till they got to Cracow, while others found a temporary refuge in the fortresses of Jaroslav and Przemysl, on the river San.

Jaroslav and Przemysl. The Russians first attacked Jaroslav, which only held out for three days. Then they tackled Przemysl,

but found it a more formidable problem. It occupied a very strong natural position, which had been further strengthened by earth-works and redoubts manned by long-range guns, and the garrison was further increased by the refugees from Auffenberg's army. The Russians therefore decided to invest it, and proceed on their way westwards. Przemyśl was on the eve of surrender every day for six months, and its uncouth name was a familiar sight to newspaper readers, though only the very boldest ventured to pronounce it.

Advance on Cracow. The strategy and tactics of the Russian generals, with the exception of Samsonoff, had so far been very skilful and successful. In Galicia the rapid blows struck at the Austrian armies and the victorious Russian progress had been quite beyond expectation, and nothing now seemed to bar the way to Cracow, the capital of the old kingdom of Poland. The capture of Cracow would open the way to Silesia, and perhaps even to Vienna and Berlin. The oil fields of Galicia were also a prize worth winning. Brusiloff's left wing was dispatched to the Carpathians and seized the Dukla Pass. The main army, leaving Przemyśl safely invested, pushed westwards along the railway to Cracow. By the end of September they were nearly half-way there, and were meeting with little opposition. But here the advance came to a sudden stop, and early in October all the Russian armies were back again on the other side of the San. The Germans had invaded Poland in force, and were threatening Warsaw.

CHAPTER VI

BELGIUM.

The Situation in Belgium. It is hard to say what the German plans were with regard to Belgium after the occupation of Brussels and the Battle of Mons; perhaps they did not know themselves. They had got what they wanted—a way into France. All their energies and forces were required for the push to Paris, and no doubt they hoped that the Belgians would quietly submit and that they would be able to hold the country with a few Landwehr and Landsturm regiments. But King Albert and his army could not sit tamely in Antwerp and see their country over-run by the enemy without striking a blow. They came out from beyond the Nethe, retook Malines, and threatened the Germans in Brussels. There was heavy fighting between Termonde and Louvain, in which the Germans did not always get the best of it. The German troops, which had been pushed west as far as Ghent and Bruges, had to be recalled; the Belgians abandoned Malines and made a fighting retreat to Antwerp.

Kultur. The behaviour of the German soldiery in the occupied towns and villages was so contrary to the customs of modern warfare that it requires a little explanation. The German people were obsessed with two ideas, which they accepted as facts requiring no proof. On the authority of their philosophers and University Professors they had arrogated to themselves a certain superiority of intellect and ideals, a sort of higher civilisation which found expression in the word "Kultur." On the authority of their military writers they were obstinately convinced of the invincibility of the German army. The resistance they met with in Belgium was repugnant to these two ideas. Here was a little nation which would not bow the knee to German "Kultur," and which had actually dared to withstand the invincible armies and delay the invasion of France for three weeks. Even after the Germans had "hacked their way through," the Belgian army would not give in, and it would be necessary to keep a lot of first line troops in Belgium who were badly wanted elsewhere. These reasons may to some extent explain, but cannot excuse, the brutality and vandalism of the Germans in Belgium, after the Battle of Mons.

Louvain. The Germans first occupied Louvain on August 17th when on their way to Brussels. Nine days later the troops in the town, a drunken disorderly lot, fired on some of their comrades retiring from Malines. The latter were persuaded that the citizens had fired on them, and for several days the city was given up to organised plunder and destruction, and the inhabitants, including the women and children, were treated with revolting cruelty. Louvain might be called the Oxford of Belgium, a city rich in the rarest specimens of mediaeval architecture, and a famous library full of valuable old manuscripts. Everything was doomed to destruction by the unbridled soldiery, except the Town Hall, which remained intact among a heap of ruins. The fate of Louvain aroused the indignation of the civilised world. Even the Kaiser was moved when he heard about it. "My heart bleeds for Louvain," he said, as he wiped away a tear. Similar scenes were afterwards enacted at Aerschot, Termonde and Alost, and the beautiful city of Malines, after being evacuated by the Belgians, was three times bombarded out of sheer wantonness. But let us leave the subject of German "Kultur" and get on with the war.

Attack on Antwerp. It was not till towards the end of September that the Germans made any serious demonstration against Antwerp. On the 26th and 27th their infantry attacks were repulsed in the neighbourhood of Termonde and Malines. On the 29th they brought up their heavy guns, and the Belgians retired to their entrenchments south of the Nethe. These linked up the outer

ring of forts which had been constructed at a distance of about ten miles from the centre of the city. There was also an inner ring of obsolete forts north of the Nethe. In spite of the fate of Liège and Namur the Belgians were confident that Antwerp could be defended. But the big German howitzers got their range on the 29th, and one fort was demolished. Next day the embankment of the water-works was destroyed, and the escaping water flooded the Belgian trenches. More forts fell on the first two days of October, and the Belgians retired to the trenches on the other side of the Nethe. On the 4th the spirits of the defenders were raised by the arrival of Mr. Winston Churchill, who was immediately followed by a brigade of the Royal Marines and part of the recently formed Naval Division, under Major-General Parris. These were pushed up at once to the trenches. They were splendid material, but badly equipped, and only half-trained, and quite unable to save a situation which was dominated entirely by the enemy artillery. The Germans managed to cross the Nethe on the night of the 5th, and the defenders had to abandon their trenches and retire on the inner ring of forts.

Fall of Antwerp. It was now becoming obvious that Antwerp was doomed. Thousands of refugees were flocking into the city, while the inhabitants were crossing the Scheldt to reach the coast, or flying over the frontier into Holland or leaving by steamers and barges from the crowded wharves. A summons of surrender was made under threat of bombardment, but was rejected. Early on the 7th the Government left by river, the shipping in the docks was blown up, the huge oil tanks on the banks of the Scheldt were breached and fired, and the dangerous animals in the "Zoo" were slaughtered. The defending forces were evacuating their positions, and marching westwards. The bombardment began before daylight on the 8th, and for hours the big shells were raining over Antwerp and demolishing street after street, but it is only fair to state that the Cathedral and other important buildings were spared as much as possible. Early on the 9th Antwerp surrendered, and the Germans marched into the almost deserted and half-ruined city. By this time the Belgian army—or most of it—had got away, and over fifty thousand were free to fight elsewhere. Three battalions of the Naval Division stayed in the trenches till the end. About 800 of these men remained in the hands of the enemy, and 1,500 crossed the frontier into Holland.

The Seventh Division. Early in October a British force had been dispatched to the help of the Belgians, and it was hoped that it would be in time to save Antwerp. It was under the command of Major-General Sir H. Rawlinson, and consisted of the famous

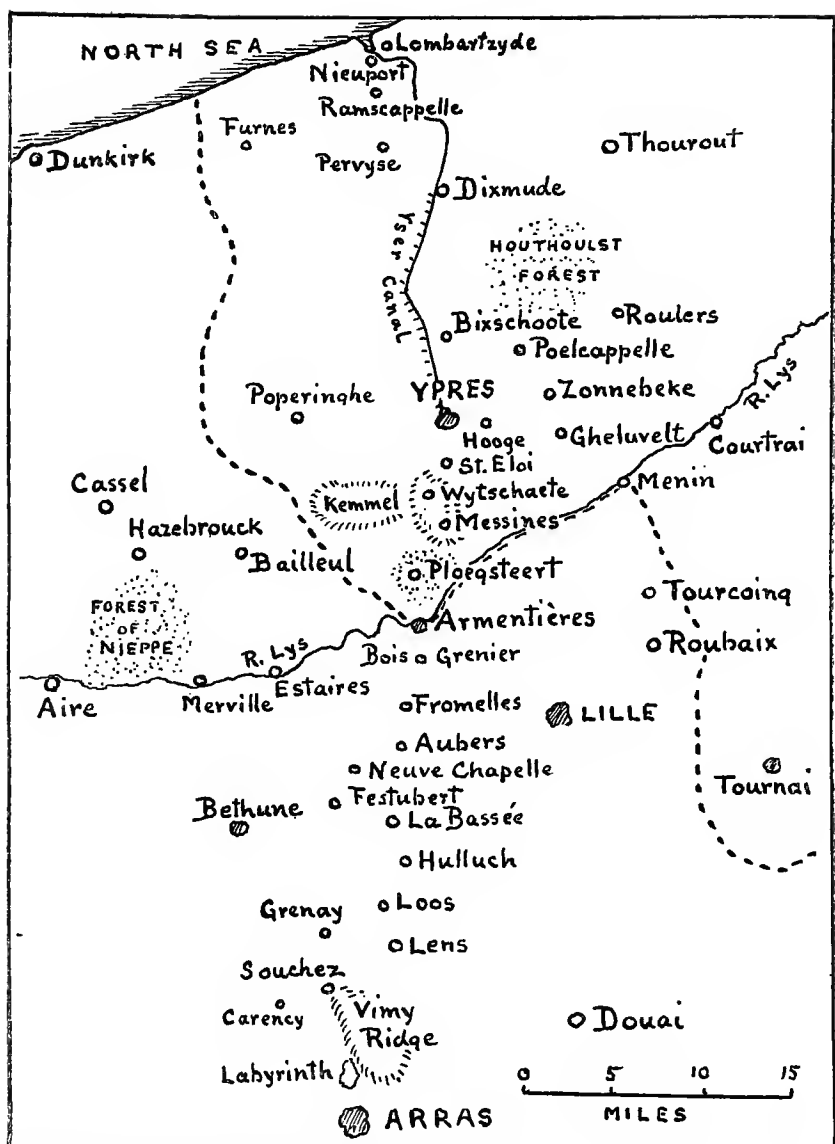
Seventh Division (Major-General Capper) and the Third Cavalry Corps (Major-General Byng). It landed at Ostend and Zeebrugge on October 6th—8th, and set out towards Antwerp. The advance guard met the retiring Belgian army at Ghent, and with them a brigade of French marines. They protected the Belgian retreat through Bruges and then southwards to Thourout. Here the Belgians branched off and halted in the Forest of Houthoulst, afterwards occupying a line along the Yser to the sea. The French marines occupied Dixmude. Rawlinson passed through Roulers, and on October 16th took up a position east of Ypres, awaiting the arrival of Haig's Corps from the Aisne. Meanwhile the Germans had seized Ghent, Bruges and Ostend, and were bringing up new army corps between Roulers and Lille.

CHAPTER VII.

ARTOIS AND FLANDERS. FIRST BATTLE OF YPRES.

Formation of the Line. By October 1st, Maud'huy had got his army in position north of the Somme, was covering Arras and pushing his cavalry towards La Bassée. Sir John French, at his own request, was to convey the British Army from the Aisne and continue the line north of La Bassée, to safeguard his communications with the Channel Ports and, if possible, outflank the German right. Gough's Cavalry Division was sent off first to clear the way. The Second Corps arrived on October 11th, and took up a position on the Canal between Béthune and La Bassée. Next day the Third Corps continued the line to Armentières, and on their left came Allenby's Cavalry. On the 16th, the Seventh Division (Rawlinson) was cast of Ypres and three days later Sir Douglas Haig arrived at St. Omer. North of Ypres were French Territorials, and the Belgian Army lined the Yser Canal from Dixmude to the sea. At first it had been hoped that Lille could be saved and an advance made towards Ghent, but the Germans brought up their reinforcements so rapidly and in such enormous numbers that it was only by the most desperate fighting against heavy odds that the Allies could hold their ground and prevent the enemy breaking through to the Channel Ports. It would take a volume to do justice to this heroic stand, but we shall have to be contented with a brief description of the fierce fighting at the principal points of attack, namely Arras, La Bassée, Ypres and the Yser Canal.

Arras. Maud'huy first of all made a bold attempt to save Lille, which was held by some French Territorials and was gradually being surrounded by the Germans. He advanced through the mining district north-east of Arras, but came upon the enemy in



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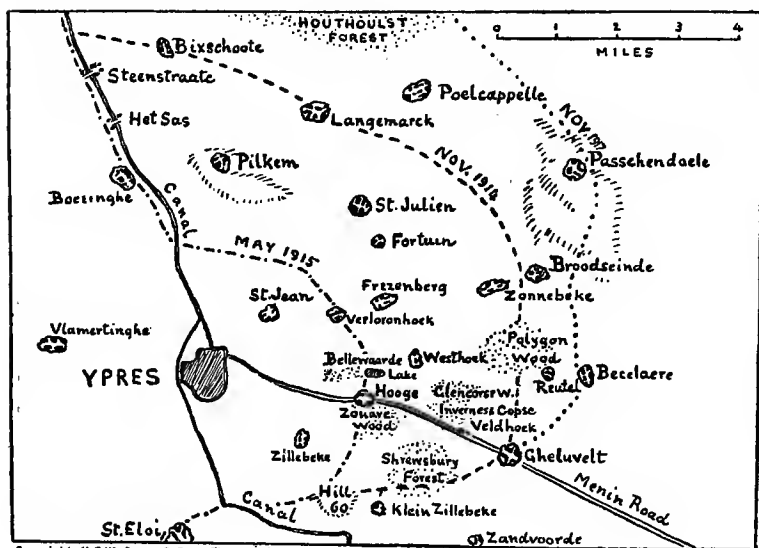
North Sea to Arras.

force at Douai, and had to fall back. After a heavy and quite unnecessary bombardment, Lille surrendered on October 13th, and the Germans had now got possession of the most important railway centre in the north of France. They now directed their attacks on Arras; the French had to evacuate the city and take up a position on a ridge of hills behind it. The enemy kept up a furious bombardment for many days and did considerable damage, but they never succeeded in taking Arras. A battalion of the Prussian Guard got in once, but they never got out again alive. The attacks continued till the end of October, but the French stood firm, and when German troops were withdrawn for the final effort at Ypres, they were able to re-occupy the ruined city and drive the enemy out of range.

La Bassée to Armentières. Gough's Cavalry Corps was soon at work driving the German patrols out of the woods between Aire and Béthune, and by the 11th, the way was clear for the Second Corps (Smith-Dorrien) to march through Béthune towards La Bassée. Lille had not yet fallen, and an effort was to be made in that direction. With his right resting on Givenchy, Smith-Dorrien wheeled eastwards and swung round his left towards the Lille—La Bassée road. The advance through the coalfields was difficult, but the villages of Aubers and Herlies were taken at the point of the bayonet. The limit of the advance was reached on the 19th. The right could make no impression on La Bassée, which was held in force by the enemy and as a fresh German corps advanced from Lille, Smith-Dorrien had to withdraw his left. He now felt the full force of the counter-attack and his left retired on Neuve Chapelle, the right still hanging on to Givenchy. About this time he was reinforced by the Lahore Division of the Indian Force which had landed at Marseilles in September. Neuve Chapelle was taken by the enemy on the 27th, and the re-capture was entrusted to the Indians and three British battalions. There was hand to hand fighting in the streets of the little town all day, and the Gurkhas had the time of their lives. At nightfall each side held half the town. There were also desperate struggles at Festubert and Givenchy, but the Fifth Division resisted all the enemy's attempts to break through to Béthune.

The Third Corps, which had detrained at St. Omer, found the enemy barring their way at Meteren. They drove them out and marched on Bailleul. Conneau's cavalry on their right and Allenby's on their left drove the German outposts before them and on the 17th, seized the crossings of the Lys, and after a fighting march of fifteen miles the Third Corps was astride that river at Armentières, and found itself up against the German main position. From that time it formed the right wing of the army defending Ypres.

The Ypres Salient. The Germans had been through Ypres earlier in the month, and Uhlans had penetrated miles to the west in the direction of St. Omer. After Gough had chased them out of Hazebrouck and the Mont des Cats, he took position with the rest of Allenby's Corps south of Ypres. When the First Corps (Haig) arrived at St. Omer, Rawlinson's Corps (the Seventh Division and Byng's Cavalry) was trying to advance on Menin and finding itself held up by increasing numbers of the enemy. Sir John French at first intended to send the First Corps to the help of the hard pressed divisions south of Armentières, but by a wise foresight



Ypres Salient.

he decided to place it north-east of Ypres, on the left of Rawlinson's Corps, where for nearly a month it was to suffer the shock of that tremendous assault which was shortly to be launched.

All hope of an offensive had not yet been abandoned. Haig tried to advance on Thourout, with Bruges as his objective, but his movement was stopped by the retirement of the French cavalry on his left and the support he had to give to the Seventh Division on his right, which after two days' hard fighting had to fall back on its original position. The line now formed a semi-circle east

of Ypres, the First Corps from Bixschoote to Zonnebeke, and the Seventh Division covering Gheluvelt and Zandvoorde. Allenby's cavalry continued the line southwards. Byng's Cavalry were posted as reserve behind Zonnebeke, but during the great battle about to begin they were here, there and everywhere—always in the right place at the right time. The salient thus formed was held by not more than 40,000 men, and on the 21st, the Germans began to hurl corps after corps against the thin khaki line in their determined attempt to break through and force the way to Calais.

First Battle of Ypres. It was now obvious that any further advance was out of the question, and Sir John French gave orders to hold the line till a French Corps, which General Joffre had promised, could come up on our left. On the 22nd some trenches were lost, gaps were made in the line and the Camerons cut off. Next day Bulfin's brigade made a counter-attack, rescued the Camerons and recovered the lost trenches, while a German division which tried to pierce our line at Langemarck, left 1,500 dead on the field of battle. On the 24th D'Urbal's Corps took over our left, and Haig was able to shorten his line by holding the trenches from Zonnebeke to Gheluvelt, while the Seventh Division, reduced to half its strength by a week's hard fighting, continued the line to Zandvoorde, with Byng's Cavalry on its right.

The Kaiser himself now appeared on the scene and gave out that Ypres must be taken before November. More corps and heavy artillery were brought up, and the attacks increased in fury all along the line, but it held firm and a counter-attack on the 29th gained us some ground south of Gheluvelt. On the 30th we lost our hold on Zandvoorde and were forced back on Klein Zillebeke, and the assault raged fiercely on the whole line south of Ypres. Allenby sent three cavalry regiments to Byng's assistance, but the Germans advanced on St. Eloi, and the Third Corps, heavily attacked in the Ploegsteert Woods, could not hold their ground, thus leaving an ugly salient at Messines. Our position south-east of Ypres was now one of extreme danger and Haig gave the order that the line from Gheluvelt to the Canal must be held at all costs. The Guards' Brigade was rushed up to the trenches to strengthen this weak spot, and a French force under General Moussy came up near Klein Zillebeke. They were badly needed; it was the eve of the last day of October, the day on which Ypres was to fall by command of the Kaiser, and we had found out from prisoners that the Germans were preparing their final attack for the morrow.

The Critical Day. Early in the morning of the 31st, a tremendous artillery fire was opened on the village of Gheluvelt, followed by an infantry attack of three corps. Charge after charge failed

to take the village, but another attack was launched south of it, which broke through between the First and Seventh Divisions, and two battalions were completely cut off—the Royal Scots Fusiliers being reduced to seventy men. The First Division was driven back towards Hooze, and only the left battalion, the South Wales Borderers, stood their ground. This left the flank of the Seventh Division exposed and it had to retire. The Germans were pouring through the gap towards Ypres. At Klein Zillebeke General Moussy tried to stem the tide; every available man was rushed to the front, and it was here that occurred that extraordinary spectacle of two or three hundred motor drivers, cooks, servants and other non-combatants charging the oncoming Germans with spanners, frying-pans, mops or any other weapons that came handy. The hour between two and three o'clock has been described by Sir John French as the most critical period of the whole battle. A shell fell on Haig's Headquarters at Hooze, his two divisional generals were wounded and six staff-officers killed. Gheluvelt was lost, the line was broken and nothing seemed to stand between the Germans and Ypres. But the hour produced the man. Brigadier-General Fitzclarence had no reserves of his own, but he heard that there were two companies of the Worcesters posted in a wood a mile away. Though they belonged to another brigade in another division he summoned them to his aid, and Major Hankey nobly responded to his call. The Worcesters advanced through the fire-swept zone, joined up with the South Wales Borderers and retook Gheluvelt at the point of the bayonet. No finer deed was performed in the whole Battle of Ypres. The situation was saved; Haig was able to rally his divisions and the gap was closed. That night our tired troops slept on the ground they had occupied in the morning, and November dawned on a baffled Kaiser.

Repulse of the Prussian Guard. Though baffled, the Kaiser did not give up hope. Two more attacks were made next day south of Ypres, and Allenby's cavalry, now sadly weakened in numbers, lost Hollebeke and Messines. There were no reserves handy except four exhausted battalions of Smith-Dorrien's Corps, which had been sent behind the lines for a rest, and the London Scottish, the first Territorial battalion to reach the front. These were rushed to the firing line, and the Scottish made a splendid bayonet charge under heavy fire, but did not succeed in retaking Messines. On the 6th there was an attack on Klein Zillebeke. Moussy's French division was driven back and the brunt of the defence was borne by Cavan's Brigade of Guards, who were in a desperate position, when Kavanagh's Household Brigade came to the rescue, and charging on foot with bayonets, retook the village. In this charge Colonel Wilson

of the "Blues" and Major Dawnay, commanding Second Life Guards, lost their lives.

The Kaiser was now preparing to stake everything on his last card, and called up the Prussian Guards, the flower of his army. In the early morning of November 11th they were seen advancing on our line: thirteen battalions of them in close column, marching with their stately parade-step as if at a review. As they approached our trenches a withering fire was opened on them and they fell by hundreds, but they never wavered, and by sheer weight broke our line in three places. But when they got through they hesitated: they did not know what to do. They were exposed to a deadly fire on their flanks, and in one place our infantry suddenly parted asunder and they found themselves right up against our guns, which let them have it point-blank. Thrown into confusion, they fell back before a counter-charge, leaving the ground littered with Prussian dead. The lost trenches were regained; the decisive attack had failed.

End of the Battle. Foiled in all attempts to break through, the Germans now turned their big guns on Ypres, and vented their spite by smashing up the famous "Cloth-Hall" and other gems of mediæval architecture which the city contained. Some futile attacks were made south of Ypres, but they were soon abandoned and the Germans settled down in their trenches to a war of positions. Before the end of the month the French took over our trenches and relieved the survivors of the divisions which had held them so stubbornly since the last week of October.

The First Battle of Ypres was one of the finest fights against odds in history. At Ypres alone there were at one time 250,000 Germans against three British infantry divisions and Allenby and Byng's cavalry; taking the whole line from La Bassée there were probably half a million Germans against 120,000 British. The German losses were enormous; the British casualties numbered over 40,000. Some brigades were reduced to less than one battalion, and some battalions could hardly muster a single platoon. The Seventh Division had only 2,300 men left out of 12,000 when withdrawn from the trenches, and the officers were reduced from 400 to 44. But the Kaiser was no nearer Calais.

The Yser Canal. On the British left the north of the salient was held by two French divisions, which resisted all the enemy's efforts to break through at Bixschoote and Langemarck. The line was continued as far as Dixmude by some French Territorial Divisions; Dixmude itself was held by a brigade of French Marines. During the last fortnight in October a terrible struggle was raging between Dixmude and the sea, where the Belgian army was lining

the banks of the Yser Canal. On the 18th Von Bulow seized the bridge at Nieuport, with the object of forcing a way to Dunkirk and Calais by the seashore. But the danger was averted from an unexpected quarter. Three British ships appeared in the offing and shelled the Germans from the sand-dunes. These were the "Monitors" which had been built at Barrow for Brazil and purchased by the British Government. They were adapted for river fighting, and though they mounted 6in. guns, they had a very shallow draught and could move easily in the shoal waters of the coast without fear of being torpedoed. The enemy had to move out of range, but on October 24—25th they crossed the river at St. Georges, and after three days' hard fighting the Belgians were driven back to the railway embankment. However, the Yser Canal had been dammed near Nieuport; on the 28th it overflowed and the Germans found themselves up to their knees in water. The Belgians retired behind the railway, and the Wurtembergers carried the embankment, and stormed Ramscappelle. But on the 31st the Belgians and Turcos charged home and drove them back over the embankment into the floods. Now the sluices of the canal were opened and the waters deepened; the struggling Germans were drowned by hundreds and the Belgians were saved.

The Indian Troops An Indian Force of two infantry divisions and a division of cavalry had disembarked at Marseilles in September. The Lahore Division reinforced General Smith-Dorrien about October 24th, and when the Meerut Division arrived at the end of the month, most of the war-worn battalions of the Second Corps were relieved from the trenches, but did not get much rest, as they were soon called upon to strengthen the line at other places. The Indians took a little time to get used to the conditions of trench warfare, and especially the whistling of our own shells over their heads, but they excelled in sudden attacks and night-work outside the trenches. They played off many tricks on the enemy, and the Germans were kept in deadly fear of the Gurkhas on dark nights. On the day when the Prussian Guards made their final effort against Ypres, Lord Roberts arrived in France to visit the Indian Forces at the front. The veteran warrior had been appointed Colonel-in-Chief of all the British Oversea Forces and "could do no more useful work," as he expressed it, than go out and encourage the Indians who had always had such an admiration for him. But after reviewing them he caught a chill, from which he died on the evening of November 14th. The old Field-Marshal had lived to see the war for which he had warned us in vain to prepare, and now he closed his career within sound of the guns and in the midst of the troops he loved so well.

December in the Trenches. In December the "Flanders mud" made attacks in the open almost impracticable, as the Royal Scots and Gordon Highlanders found in their dash on the Wytschaete Woods on the 14th. The Indians, no doubt tired of being cooped up in their trenches, became very active about the 19th. They captured two lines of German trenches, but the next day found their flanks exposed and their position untenable. This provoked the enemy to retaliate by an attack on Givenchy, which was partially successful. The Gurkhas had to abandon their trenches and in spite of a brilliant counter-attack by the Seaforth Highlanders, there were big gaps in our line when help arrived from Sir Douglas Haig, the enemy were turned out of Festubert and Givenchy, and the line was restored. The weather now became so bad that the fighting was limited to shelling, bombing, raiding and sniping; and this went on through the winter months all along that entrenched line which ran from the Belgian coast through Dixmude, round Ypres, west of La Bassée, east of Arras and Albert, north of Soissons and Rheims, through the Argonne, a wide circle at Verdun, a German wedge at St. Mihiel, and southwards through the Vosges Mountains to Switzerland. There was desperate fighting in the Argonne, where the Crown Prince tried to hack through from Varennes, but he lost more ground than he gained, while Sarraill gradually extended the girdle of Verdun.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EASTERN FRONT.

First Invasion of Poland. We must now turn from the war of positions in the west to the war of movement in the east, where Von Hindenburg had been made commander-in-chief of all the German and Austrian forces on the Russian front. At the beginning of October he was preparing to invade Poland with a combined force of nearly two million men. This was divided into five columns, which were to advance towards five different spots on the Vistula. The Russian plan of defence was simple: the Grand Duke Nicholas withdrew all his forces across the Vistula except those round Warsaw, which had to be defended. A line of entrenchments was drawn round the city, defended by big guns from Japan and new divisions from Siberia. The Germans advanced without much opposition, and occupied Lodz, a great manufacturing centre which was more than half German. By the 15th their advance-guard was in touch with the defences of Warsaw. The attack began next day, but the trenches were stoutly defended by the Siberians, and after four days the assault began to weaken. The German



H.F.W. Deane & Sons The Year Book Press Ltd.

Russian Front.

left had been turned by Rennenkampf, advancing from Novo-Georgievsk, and the left centre had to fall back to keep in line. But worse disasters were in store for the columns on the right. An attempt to cross the Vistula between Warsaw and Ivangorod failed with heavy loss ; but a large column was allowed to cross further south at Josefov, and fell into a trap. It was gaily marching through the swampy forests towards the Lublin railway, when Russky fell upon it unawares and hardly a man returned to tell the tale.

German Retreat. The next day the Russians crossed the Vistula at several points and swept everything before them. The Germans were driven through the forests with tremendous slaughter. Russky pursued them relentlessly, and advancing rapidly along the Pilitza, cut off their army of the North from that of the South. The retreat soon became a rout : the Germans sacrificed thousands of men in saving their guns and material, and destroying roads and railways behind them. Lowicz, Lodz and Petrokoff were recaptured before the end of the month. A last stand was made at Kielce, but after a battle lasting a day and a night, the Russian onslaught overbore all opposition and the enemy were again in full flight towards the frontier. In a few days they were west of the Warta, and on November 10th Cossacks crossed the frontier into Silesia and cut the railway from Posen to Cracow. But once again the tide of battle took another turn.

Second Invasion of Poland. Even while retreating from Warsaw in the last week in October, Von Hindenburg was planning another invasion of Poland. This time he had associated with him two generals whose names were soon to become famous : Ludendorff and Von Mackensen. The former was his Chief-of-Staff, and was responsible for the strategy, whilst to the other was entrusted the leadership of the armies. Hindenburg lost no time. The strategic railways on the frontier enabled him to mass large forces in the region of Thorn, and several corps were brought across from the western front. This time the attack was to be made through North-West Poland, which had not yet been laid waste. As Russky had only 200,000 men to meet 800,000 Germans he thought it prudent to retire to the line of the River Bzura, and there he took up a strong position with his right resting on the Vistula near Iloff and his centre passing through Lowicz and covering Lodz. Between his centre and Kutno were many miles of marshes, which could only be crossed by a causeway made for heavy traffic. The Germans seized this causeway, attacked Russky's right and tried to outflank his left. The attack was so severe that his centre was driven in and formed a kind of loop. One German division actually broke through the end of the loop, but on reinforcements

coming up from Ivanoff the line was restored and it was completely cut off. Russky now made desperate efforts to close the loop at the top, and the 90,000 Germans struggling inside it were in a most dangerous position as the hold gradually tightened. An urgent message had been sent to Rennenkampf for help, but he arrived a day too late: Von Mackensen had been reinforced and managed to extricate half of his two army corps. Russky in his turn was in danger of being surrounded; he had to evacuate Lodz, and for the second time the Manchester of Poland fell into the hands of the enemy. Russky retired slowly towards the Vistula and took up a strong position on the banks of the Bzura and its tributary, the Rawka. Here he dug himself in, and though the enemy made repeated attacks to break through they could get no nearer Warsaw.

Russian Advance in Galicia. While Hindenburg was making his first push into Poland, an Austrian column advanced to the San, recaptured Jaroslav and relieved Przemyśl. But three weeks later, when Russky was chasing the Germans back to the frontier, a new movement was started in Galicia. Jaroslav was taken once more, and Przemyśl re-invested. Brusiloff was advancing by the Carpathians, and seizing the passes, and Dmitrieff was soon well on his way to Cracow. Early in December he crossed the Raba, and got within twelve miles of the city. He was already swinging his right wing round the northern forts of Cracow, when he found himself faced with an awkward situation. His right was being attacked by an army from the Warta, and his left was being out-flanked by another Austrian army coming up from the south-west. To make matters worse, he heard that Brusiloff had been driven from the Dukla Pass, and that the Hungarians would soon be pouring into Galicia and cutting his communications with Brusiloff. These circumstances compelled Dmitrieff to retire on Tarnov, forty miles east of Cracow. The Austrians next gained the Lupkow Pass, and were struggling hard for the Uzzok Pass, the direct road to Przemyśl and Lemberg; but fortunately reinforcements arrived and Dmitrieff was able to advance and recapture the Dukla, while Brusiloff drove the Austrians from the Lupkow. Cracow had been saved, but by the end of the year the Russians had a strong line across Galicia from the Dukla Pass to the Vistula, and the fall of Przemyśl was hourly expected.

Turkey Joins the Germans. During the first three months of the war it became more and more obvious that the Turks would throw in their lot with the Germans. Britain had been the ally and best friend of Turkey during the last century and had no wish to quarrel, nor had the Turks any grievance against Britain. But German influences were too strong for them. Their army had been

equipped, armed and trained by the Germans, and though Enver Pasha was nominally Commander-in-Chief, the guiding spirit was his Chief of Staff, General Liman von Sanders. The Turkish armies were mobilised and a large number of German officers were sent to Constantinople; in fact, Turkey was completely in the power of the Germans, who hoped that their "Ally" would be able to hold a large Russian army in the Caucasus, threaten India and Egypt, and stir up the Moslem World generally against the British. The Turks offered a refuge to German warships, and committed so many hostile acts that the situation became impossible. On November 1st war was declared. A move was soon made in the Caucasus, which became another Russian "front." Enver's plans were craftily devised. He proposed to draw the Russians on towards Erzeroum, to push three corps across the mountains, cut them off, and seize Kars and the railway to Tiflis. The Russians advanced on Erzeroum, according to Enver's plan, and in the middle of December Enver's three corps tried to get behind them. But the winter weather played for the Russians; the last three days of the year saw the Turks—worn, half-frozen and half-starved—fighting a hopeless battle in the snow-swept passes of the mountains.

Serbia. From August 25th to September 5th the Austrians contented themselves with bombarding Belgrade. This naturally annoyed the Serbians, who made a dash across the river and destroyed the Austrian batteries at Semlin. Serbia had to be "punished" again for this impertinence. The Austrians crossed the Drina, but were driven back and the Serbians invaded Bosnia, but soon retired. Then came another lull, varied by bombardments of Belgrade. The third Austrian invasion began on November 8th. They crossed the Save and the Drina in great force at several points, and the Serbian army, commanded by Prince Alexander, retired to a strong position round Valjevo. After several days' heavy fighting in which the Serbs exhausted their ammunition, a further retirement was made to the mountains south of Valjevo. Here King Peter joined his army. The Austrians occupied Valjevo, where they wasted a fortnight. They were so confident that they had got the Serbs beaten that they even sent off two or three corps to Galicia. Meanwhile the Serbs were strengthening their positions and receiving supplies of ammunition from the Allies. The big attack began on December 2nd. The Austrians exhausted themselves against the Serbian lines, and two days later came the counter-attack. The Austrian centre was driven in and the right had to retire; the retirement soon became a rout: the Serbs charged down from the hills on the beaten enemy, captured some thousands of prisoners and chased the rest across the Save and the Drina.

For the third time Serbia was rid of the invaders, and King Peter was able to spend his Christmas in Belgrade.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WORLD WAR.

German Colonies. When Germany, rather late in the day, began to look round the world for colonies, she found most of the desirable "places in the sun" already occupied, and she had to be content with what she could get. There were in Africa several large tracts of country as yet unappropriated, and Germany pounced on them at once. One of them was a vast waterless desert in the south-west, on the coast of which Britain had acquired the only harbour, Walfisch Bay. There were also two strips on the west coast which had been left unoccupied by the British and French, called Togoland and the Cameroons. These were taken over and the German claims pushed far into the interior. On the east coast, opposite Zanzibar, a district twice the size of Germany became German East Africa. For some time these colonies were a failure: there was resistance on the part of the natives, who were brutally ill-treated, and the Germans themselves were reluctant to emigrate to them, but the Government spent enormous sums in developing them, and before the war they were beginning to prosper. In the Pacific, part of New Guinea had been taken over, and given the name of Kaiser Wilhelm's Land, and a number of small islands annexed. In 1897 China was forced to grant a 99 years' lease of Kiao-Chau on the Shantung Peninsula. It cost twenty millions sterling to make the chief town, Tsing Tao, a worthy centre from which German Kultur could be spread throughout the East. It was the apple of the Kaiser's eye and the base of his Pacific Fleet. He had spent millions on his navy to protect his colonies, but when the time came it was powerless to defend them, and one by one they fell.

The Pacific Islands. When war broke out, Australia and New Zealand lost no time in fitting out an expedition to attack the German colonies in the Pacific and destroy their wireless stations. Escorted by H.M.S. *Australia* and *Melbourne*, a force landed at Samoa, which surrendered without resistance on August 28th. New Pommern was visited next, and here the Australian Naval Brigade fought their way to the wireless station and destroyed it. Kaiser Wilhelm's Land gave in without a blow, all the Bismarck Archipelago, and the Solomon and Caroline Islands were seized and their wireless demolished, and by the end of October the Germans had not got an island left worth having.

Kiao-Chau. Japan had no reason to like the Germans, who had always treated the Japanese with contempt. On August 16th she demanded the restitution of Kiao-Chau to China, and as no answer was received, declared war on Germany. The Japanese undertook to capture Kiao-Chau (which was to be restored to China after the war) and patrol the Pacific with their fleet. Tsing-Tao had been strongly fortified, and was garrisoned by 5,000 troops (chiefly Marines) well supplied with artillery and machine-guns. The German Pacific Squadron had already escaped from the harbour when British and Japanese warships appeared on August 27th, and blocked up the entrance. A Japanese force, under General Kamio, landed in the north of the peninsula on September 2nd, and though held up for some days by floods, was bombarding the Tsing-Tao forts on the 27th. Another force had landed at Laochau Bay, east of Tsing-Tao, and with them came the South Wales Borderers and a battalion of Sikhs under General Barnadiston. Before the end of the month Tsing-Tao was completely invested. The garrison had been ordered by the Kaiser to hold out till the last man, and they endured a bombardment from land and sea for a month. General Kamio then determined to carry the place by storm. Under a heavy shell-fire, which silenced the forts and destroyed the shipping in the harbour, the attackers approached nearer and nearer. At dawn on November 7th the troops were awaiting the signal for the assault when the white flag appeared over the town. More than 4,000 Germans surrendered as prisoners of war, and the Kaiser's stronghold was occupied by the Allies.

Togoland and the Cameroons. Of all the German colonies, Togoland was the first to fall. It was awkwardly situated (for the Germans) between British Ashanti and French Dahomey. On August 6th it was invaded from both sides. Lome, the capital, was abandoned, and the Germans, with their native auxiliaries, retired along the railway to protect their wireless station at Kamina. A delaying action was fought at Nuiji, and no efforts were spared to hinder the pursuit of the Allies. The Germans had made great preparations for defence at Kamina but their native troops deserted them, and on the approach of the Allies they sent out a white flag. They had previously destroyed their wireless station, one of the finest in the world.

The operations in the Cameroons were not so successful. Three British columns which entered from Nigeria in August met with unexpected difficulties and were driven back over the border. In September two gunboats, the *Cumberland* and the *Dwarf*, did fine work on the coast and helped to capture Duala, the capital; the former seized eight German ships in the river. The enemy now

began to retire from the coast, the Allies seized the railways, and the final conquest of the Cameroons, a vast territory stretching as far inland as Lake Chad, became only a question of time.

East Africa. A more difficult problem presented itself in East Africa, where the Germans, with their well-drilled native troops, were particularly aggressive. The British, for some time had to rely on two battalions of the King's African Rifles and the Mounted Rifles. In August a British cruiser made an attack on Dar-es-Salam, while the Germans raided Nyasaland and Northern Nigeria. They crossed into British East Africa and tried to cut the railway from Mombasa to Uganda, but reinforcements arrived from India and they were driven back. They next seized some villages on the shores of Victoria Nyanza, but were driven out by the K.A.R. and the fire from the British boats on the lake. The British still remained on the defensive till a second Indian Force arrived in November. It effected a landing on German territory and tried to storm the town of Tanga; but it suffered a reverse in which swarms of bees are said to have played a part, and had to retire to British East Africa.

South Africa. The position in South Africa was difficult, but fortunately we had a man at the head of affairs who was equal to any emergency. This was General Louis Botha, the ablest commander who fought against us in the Boer War, and he was splendidly supported by General Smuts. Early in August the Germans abandoned Swakopmund and Luderitz Bay, and retired to Windhoek, 200 miles inland. In September they made several dashes into British territory and there was stiff fighting along the Orange River. They were counting on a Boer rebellion which would place the whole of South Africa in their hands. As a matter of fact, there was a rebellion, but the great majority of the Boers remained loyal, and it was suppressed by the energetic and tactful measures of General Botha. Early in October Colonel Maritz, the commander in the N.W. Cape Province, was suspected of being in league with the enemy, and Botha sent Colonel Brits to relieve him of his command. Maritz now openly declared for the Germans. Brits attacked him and drove him over the boundary, and an attempt he made to recross the Orange River with the Germans was repulsed.

But a more formidable rebellion was now on foot. General Beyers had raised the standard of revolt in the Transvaal, and Christian de Wet, that picturesque and slippery personality who had led the British such a dance in the Boer War, was raising commandoes of malcontents in the Orange River Colony, the scene of his former exploits. General Botha acted with promptitude and vigour; volunteers flocked to his command, and Beyers and de Wet

were both routed but not captured. There followed an extraordinary chase : De Wet still retained much of his old slimness and dodged and doubled about for a month. At last he made a dash for the German territory and was rounded up by motor-cars at Waterburg on December 1st, with the six men who remained with him. Beyers was drowned a week later in trying to cross the Vaal River.

The Persian Gulf. Soon after the war broke out a force was despatched from India to the Persian Gulf, to safeguard British interests and protect the Anglo-Persian Oil Pipe. It was commanded by Major-General Delamain, and consisted of the Poonah Brigade, which included the Second Dorsets. It was landed on the island of Bahrein, but when Turkey came in against us, it was re-embarked and moved up to the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab. On November 13th the two other brigades of the division arrived under General Barrett ; they included the 1st Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry and the 2nd Norfolks. An advance was begun on Basra, the city from which Sindbad the Sailor made his famous voyages. On the 18th they came across a Turkish force strongly entrenched, but the Dorsets carried the trenches with a bayonet charge, and the Turks fled. Our gunboats discovered that Basra had been abandoned, and on the 22nd it was occupied by our troops. A detachment was now pushed on towards Kurna, fifty miles further north, where the Tigris and the old Channel of the Euphrates join. The Turks were driven across the Tigris, but it was evident that Kurna was held in force, so it was decided to cross the river higher up and make an attack on Kurna from the north. This was done, but when all was ready for the assault a steamer came along the river carrying a Turkish officer who agreed to an unconditional surrender of the town and garrison. The small expeditionary force had so far achieved great results at a trifling cost. It had fought its way through the ancient country of Chaldaea, and was now in Mesopotamia near the reputed site of the Garden of Eden.

Egypt. Our position in Egypt was rather curious. The nominal ruler was the Khedive, and he was nominally subject to the Sultan of Turkey, but Egypt had actually been governed by the British since our occupation in 1882. The army had been created by Lord Kitchener and the government organised by Lord Cromer, and we now found Egypt a very convenient training ground for troops from Australia and New Zealand. The Germans had great hopes that the Egyptians would rise against us and drive us out, but they were disappointed. The Khedive, Abbas II., was certainly very pro-Turkish, and when we found ourselves at war with Turkey, he judged it expedient to leave Egypt for Vienna.

His uncle, Prince Hussein, was made Sultan of Egypt, the Turkish suzerainty was abolished, and with the assent of France, Egypt became a British Protectorate. It was quite expected that the Turks would make an attack on the Suez Canal. Djemal Pasha, the Turkish commander in Syria, was said to be making great preparations, but he had the wilderness to cross, and with the exception of a skirmish with the Bedouins, nothing happened before the end of the year.

CHAPTER X.

THE WAR AT SEA.

Ready for Action. England looked to her Navy in her hour of need, and when the war-clouds appeared in the distance her Navy was ready. A Test Mobilisation of the Third (or Reserve) Fleet had been carried out about the middle of July, and a week later the Home Fleets had been reviewed by the King at Spithead. The First Fleet (consisting of the latest and fastest ships) steamed off to Portland on the 24th, but on the night of the 26th all manoeuvre leave was cancelled, and the fleets were ordered to remain in their home-ports ready to move. The First Fleet left Portland on July 29th and from that moment the movements of our ships were shrouded in mystery. The Naval Reserves were called up on August 2nd, and next day the Admiralty was able to report: "The entire Navy is now on a war-footing." Sir John Jellicoe took over the command of the Home Fleets from Sir George Callaghan, whose time had almost expired, with Rear-Admiral Madden as his Chief-of-Staff. Several large liners were fitted up as armed cruisers, and numerous smaller craft were soon engaged on patrol duty and mine-sweeping. Two battleships which were being built for Turkey were taken over and named the *Erin* and *Agincourt*, and two scout-destroyers and three monitors, which had just been constructed for Chile and Brazil respectively, were added to the British Navy.

The North Sea. There were rumours of big sea-fights in the North Sea in the first fortnight of August, but these proved to be unfounded, as the German Fleet was safe in the Kiel Canal, and wisely decided to stay there. The German Navy was under the control of Admiral von Tirpitz, who, to give him his due, had raised it during the last fifteen years from insignificance to the second best fleet in the world. Admiral von Ingenhoop was in command of their so-called "High-Seas" Fleet. In spite of Mr. Winston Churchill's pronouncement that we would "dig them like rats out of their holes," it was impracticable for us to attack the German ships in their home bases. Anyone who has read

that fascinating book, "The Riddle of the Sands," will understand and appreciate the wonderful protection which nature has bestowed on the German coastline between Holland and Denmark, in the shape of islands, sandbanks and dangerous shifting channels which lead to the estuaries of the rivers in which their sea-ports are situated; and the Germans had used every art to make these approaches even more dangerous and difficult. Thirty miles from the coast stands, like a grim sentinel, the little island of Heligoland. This island belonged to Britain till 1890; it was fast crumbling to bits and its principal inhabitants were rabbits; so we exchanged it for certain rights in East Africa. But if useless to us, it proved very useful to the Germans. It soon became a solid fortification of concrete and steel, bristling with big guns and serving as a convenient haven of refuge for their smaller craft. The Germans did not confine their mine-laying operations to the defence of their own coast; their plan was to scatter them broadcast in the North Sea. The very day after war was declared the *Königin Luise* was caught in the act off the coast of Suffolk. She was sunk by a destroyer and her crew rescued by the *Amphion*, but unfortunately the *Amphion* struck a mine and sank with the German prisoners on board.

The Battle of the Bight. During August German light cruisers and destroyers were in the habit of coming out from behind the shelter of Heligoland for jaunts in the North Sea, and caused considerable destruction to our fishing craft. So, towards the end of the month, Admiral Jellicoe decided on a "reconnaissance in force" off the Bight of Heligoland. Eight submarines, escorted by the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake*, went on ahead as decoys, under Commodore Keyes. They were followed by two torpedo flotillas, accompanied by the cruisers *Arethusa* (Commodore Tyrwhitt) and *Fearless* (Captain Blunt), supported in the distance by the Light Cruiser Squadron (Admiral Christian) and the First Battle-Cruiser Squadron (Admiral Beatty). The idea was to entice the German cruisers out from behind Heligoland and destroy them before battle-ships could come to their assistance. Early in the morning of the 28th three of our submarines showed themselves on the surface, as decoys. A swarm of German destroyers soon appeared from Heligoland, and our submarines, having fulfilled their purpose, retired westwards. Our flotillas, with the *Arethusa* in attendance, attacked the destroyers, sank the Commodore's boat and put about a dozen others out of action. The *Arethusa* was now attacked by two German cruisers, but returned such a hot fire that one of them, the *Ariadne*, retired in a crippled condition to Heligoland. The *Fearless* tackled the other, a four-funnelled cruiser, which was

also put to flight. The *Arethusa* hardly had time to get her damaged guns in working order again, when the four-funnelled cruiser was seen coming back with the *Mainz* and the *Köln*. The *Arethusa* and the *Fearless* put up a splendid fight till the bigger ships could come to their assistance. The four-funnelled cruiser was knocked out and turned tail for the second time. The *Mainz* was tackled next, and after a fight which lasted twenty-five minutes she was sinking and on fire. The light cruiser squadron now came up and speedily finished her off. When our battle-cruisers appeared on the scene, they found the *Arethusa* engaged with the *Köln* at long range, and Beatty opened fire. While circling round to cut her off from Heligoland, the *Lion* sighted a two-funnelled cruiser ahead (probably the *Ariadne* returning to the fray). Two salvoes from the 13.5's were sufficient, and she disappeared, burning furiously and sinking. Beatty now turned his attention to the damaged *Köln* and sank her with two more salvoes. Our object had now been accomplished and our ships steamed home. The *Arethusa* added fresh lustre to an illustrious name by her plucky fight in this engagement. She was somewhat seriously damaged and was towed to port by the *Hogue*.

Submarines and Mines. After the loss of their three cruisers in the Battle of the Bight, the Germans kept their "High Seas Fleet" tighter than ever behind the shelter of Heligoland and trusted more and more to submarines and mines. Some years before the war Admiral Sir Percy Scott had stated his opinion that our larger ships would be at the mercy of these under-sea terrors, and it was a matter of interest to see how far this would be justified. As early as August 9th the enemy made a submarine attack on a British light-cruiser squadron, without inflicting any damage, but one of the submarines, the U15, was rammed by the *Birmingham*. The "command of the sea," however, entailed certain risks, and we naturally suffered losses. In September the *Speedy* struck a mine and sank, and the *Pathfinder* was torpedoed by a submarine and went down with nearly all her crew. On the 22nd a worse disaster happened. Three cruisers, the *Aboukir*, *Hogue* and *Cressy*, were patrolling in the North Sea off the coast of Holland, when the *Aboukir* was struck by a torpedo and began to sink. The *Hogue* and *Cressy* stood by to render assistance, when the *Hogue* was torpedoed and shortly afterwards the *Cressy* shared the same fate. They were old cruisers, but the loss of life was appalling: over 1,400 officers and men were killed or drowned. Lieut.-Commander Weddigen, U9, who wrought this destruction, became a popular hero in Germany. On October 16th he torpedoed the *Hawke* with a loss of 400 men, and on the 31st the *Hermes* was

sunk in the Straits of Dover. But our own submarines were not idle ; from the very first day of the war they had been exploring the shallow waters of the German coast. The chief honours fell to E9 (Commander Max Horton), which torpedoed the cruiser *Hela* and the destroyer S146 at the mouth of the Ems river. The Germans sustained another loss when the *Yorck* struck one of their own mines at the entrance of Jahde Bay and sank. A flotilla of enemy destroyers which appeared off the Dutch Coast was attacked by the *Undaunted* (Captain Fox) and four British destroyers and routed with serious loss. Twice only before the end of the year did the big ships of the German Fleet put to sea. The first time (November 3rd) a futile raid was made on Yarmouth. The second affair was more serious. Hartlepool, Whitby and Scarborough were heavily shelled ; at Hartlepool over 100 people were killed and much damage was done. From the size of the shells (12 inch) the newest German battle-cruisers must have been sent over to bombard these defenceless towns. In their homeward flight they scattered mines behind them and made pursuit very dangerous.

The Mediterranean. When war broke out most of the German ships of war were in their home ports, but certain scattered units were on the surface of the waters in various parts of the world. Attention was soon called to the fact that two German cruisers were at large in the Mediterranean. These were the *Goeben*, the fastest battle-cruiser in the German navy, and the *Breslau*, a smaller cruiser, but nearly as fast. After shelling the coast of Algiers, these two made for Messina ; but as they could not stay there for more than 24 hours without being interned, the officers handed over their wills and signed portraits of the Kaiser to the German Consul, and the cruisers set off, . . . with bands playing and flags flying, in an easterly direction. They were sighted by the *Gloucester*, which made a plucky chase and did a considerable amount of damage with her fire ; but the cruisers did not stop to fight, and eventually reached the Dardanelles. Here they ought to have been disarmed and interned by the Turks. But three days afterwards it was announced that Turkey had "bought" them from Germany, and her promise to dismiss the crews was not kept. For two or three years these strange ships made fitful appearances in the Black Sea, being disabled and sunk, or returning victorious to Constantinople as the case might be.

German Raiders. The most formidable German force to be reckoned with on the waters was Von Spee's Pacific Squadron, which escaped from the harbour of Tsing-Tau on August 6th. The smaller cruisers were sent off commerce-raiding, while Von Spee himself, with the big cruisers *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst*,

sailed across the Pacific, giving out that he would fight any ship he met, except the *Australia*. There were also several fast cruisers and armed liners roving the seas on their own account, like the pirates of old, and capturing any merchantships they fell in with ; but as they had no ports to which they could take their prizes, they had to sink them. One of the most successful of these raiders was the cruiser *Karlsruhe*, which operated in the Atlantic, and by the end of October had seventeen victims to her credit. Her end was veiled in mystery ; various stories were told to account for it, but it is most probable that she was wrecked in the West Indies in November. Another cruiser, the *Koenigsberg*, was at work off the East African coast. She found the light cruiser *Pegasus* coaling in Zanzibar harbour, and opened fire from her heavier guns. The *Pegasus* was completely smashed up and lost half of her crew, but her flag, after being twice shot away, was held up by marines till the end came. A few weeks later the *Koenigsberg* was discovered hiding in the Rufiji river by the *Chatham*, but as the latter could not get near enough to destroy her, the channel was blocked up and the *Koenigsberg* safely interned. Two large armed liners were soon accounted for. The *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, after making five captures, was attacked and sunk by the *Highflyer* off the coast of West Africa on August 26th. The *Cap Trafalgar* had a duel with the Cunard liner *Carmania*. Both were ships of about 19,000 tons and in other respects equally matched. They pounded each other for nearly two hours, and in the end the *Cap Trafalgar* was knocked out and sunk.

Career of the "Emden." The greatest of all the raiders was the light cruiser *Emden*, which had been detached from the Pacific Squadron to work the Indian Ocean. By the sheer impudence of her exploits and the sportsmanlike conduct of her captain, Von Muller, she aroused amazement almost akin to admiration. After rigging up a dummy funnel, which made her look rather like the British cruiser *Yarmouth*, she got to work in the Bay of Bengal, and by September 10th had already captured six steamers, of which she sank five and sent the crews to Calcutta in the sixth. On the 22nd she appeared off Madras, shelled the oil tanks and incidentally broke up a big dinner-party which was being held in honour of her reported destruction. She then paid a visit to Pondicherry and a week later the crews of six more steamers were landed at Colombo. Having collected six more by October 22nd they were sent ashore at Cochin. The *Emden's* next exploit was to steam into the harbour of Penang in the middle of the night, where she created consternation among the shipping and let off two torpedoes at the Russian cruiser *Jemchug*. In making her escape she was

attacked by the French destroyer *Mousquet*, but the latter was no match for the *Emden* and got sunk. The next move was to Keeling Island, to destroy the wireless station, and this led to her doom. An Australian squadron got wind of her whereabouts, and the *Sydney* was despatched to tackle her; when the *Sydney* appeared in the distance a landing party was already at work destroying the wireless and cables. At sight of the *Sydney* the *Emden* made off at full speed, but could not escape; and after a fight lasting ten hours she was run ashore ablaze. She suffered over 150 casualties in this action; the Captain and the rest of the crew were taken prisoners. The landing-party seized a yacht in the harbour and got away.

Battle of Coronel. On November 1st Admiral Von Spee was cruising off the coast of Chile between Valparaiso and Coronel. He had with him the large cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, and the light cruisers *Dresden* and *Nurnberg*; his other cruiser, the *Leipzig*, seems to have been absent at the time. A small British squadron, under Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock, was also off the coast of Chile on that day. It consisted of the armoured cruiser *Good Hope*, a smaller cruiser, the *Monmouth*, and the light cruiser *Glasgow*. Cradock was expecting to be reinforced, but he had made up his mind to fight Von Spee if he met him, though he knew that his force was not equal to the enemy's.

The Germans were sighted by the *Glasgow* at four o'clock, and late in the afternoon both the squadrons were steaming southwards, twelve miles apart. The enemy ships were between the British and the shore. At first the Germans had the setting sun in their eyes, while their own ships showed up well against the shore; but Cradock could not get near enough to start the action while the light was in his favour. After sunset the British ships stood out against the horizon, and offered a splendid target for the enemy. The *Scharnhorst* was leading; she was the champion ship at target-practice in the German Navy, and as she closed in she poured shell after shell on the *Good Hope* with deadly precision. The *Good Hope* took such a list to port that her guns could not get the necessary elevation. She was soon seen to be on fire; towards eight o'clock a tremendous explosion occurred, and she went down with the gallant Admiral and a thousand men. The *Monmouth*, which had been fighting the *Gneisenau*, was also on fire and her bows almost under water; the *Nurnberg* came up and completed her destruction. The *Glasgow* had been hit five times; it was useless for a small cruiser to stay and fight alone, so taking advantage of her speed she made off in the gloom to warn the *Canopus*, an old battleship which ought to have been with Cradock, but had got left behind owing to the slowness of her pace.

Battle of the Falkland Islands. On the receipt of this bad news Lord Fisher, who had just been appointed First Sea Lord, took prompt measures. A powerful squadron, under Sir Doveton Sturdee, was at once dispatched with the utmost secrecy, to hunt out and tackle Von Spee. It consisted of the battle-cruisers *Invincible* and *Inflexible*, and the armoured cruisers *Carnarvon*, *Cornwall* and *Kent*. The light cruisers *Glasgow* and *Bristol* were picked up in the Atlantic. It was expected that the Germans would make a raid on the Falkland Islands, where the *Canopus* was stationed as guard-ship. Sturdee arrived there on December 7th, and early next morning his ships were coaling in the harbour when the enemy squadron was signalled approaching from the south. The *Kent* was ordered to the mouth of the harbour, and when the leading German ships got within range, the *Canopus*, which was in the inner harbour, opened fire over the low neck of land. Von Spee thought at first that he had only the *Canopus* and perhaps one or two small cruisers to deal with, and that the islands would be an easy prey; but when he got round the headland and saw the two big battle-cruisers he realised his mistake and made off at full speed eastward. The *Gneisenau* was leading, followed by the *Nürnberg*, *Scharnhorst*, *Dresden* and *Leipzig*. Sturdee lost no time in pursuing, the *Kent* and *Carnarvon* in front. But they were soon overtaken by the battle-cruisers and the speedy *Glasgow*. Just before one o'clock the *Inflexible* and *Invincible* opened fire on the *Leipzig*, and as the shells fell around her she turned off to the south-west, followed by the *Dresden* and *Nürnberg*. Sturdee dispatched the *Kent*, *Glasgow* and *Cornwall* in chase, and opened fire on the big German cruisers at a range of seven miles. At three o'clock the *Scharnhorst* caught fire forward and the *Gneisenau* was badly hit by the *Inflexible*. But though Von Spee knew that his hour had come, he put up a game fight. His flagship was soon wreathed in smoke and escaping steam, "at times a shell would cause a large hole to appear in her side, through which could be seen the red glow of flame." But her flag remained flying until she suddenly took a heavy list to port and disappeared under the waves. The *Gneisenau*, though badly knocked about, continued the fight alone. Even when reduced to a blazing wreck she kept firing from time to time with a single gun. At six o'clock she heeled over and sank. About a hundred survivors were rescued by our boats. Meanwhile the fast *Glasgow* had overhauled the *Leipzig* and engaged her for an hour till the *Cornwall* came up and sank her about nine o'clock. The *Kent*, doing two knots beyond her full-speed, got within range of the *Nürnberg* at five o'clock and sank her after an action lasting two hours and a half. The *Dresden* alone escaped, but only for a time.

CHAPTER XI.

SUMMARY, 1914.

Results of Five Months' Fighting. We can now proceed to sum up the results of the first five months' fighting, and consider the effects on the great nations involved in the struggle. We have seen how the murder of an Austrian Archduke in Serbia gave Germany the chance of that bid for world-power for which she had been preparing so long. Confident in the strength of her armies rather than in the justice of her cause she declared war on Russia, attacked France, and invaded the neutral kingdom of Belgium. It was not surprising, under the circumstances, that at first the Germans met with some measure of success. The capture of Brussels and the advance on Paris were hailed in Berlin as glorious triumphs, though the popular rejoicing was somewhat tempered by the panic in East Prussia. Then came the Battle of the Marne, and the invincible armies were hurled back northwards to the Aisne. Baulked in France, the Germans sought further laurels in Belgium, and Antwerp and Ostend fell into their hands, but the way to Calais was barred by the immortal stand of the British Army at Ypres, and the invaders soon found any further progress impossible against the defensive line which stretched from the North Sea to Switzerland. They had failed to carry out their programme; Paris and Calais before the fall of the autumn leaves and Warsaw before the fall of the winter snow. At the end of the year Paris was further off than at the beginning of September, and Calais was certainly no nearer than when patrols of Uhlans occupied Amiens and Cassel. Warsaw was still intact. Twice had Hindenburg invaded Russia, and twice been driven back, and he found himself held up in Poland for the winter with both his flanks in danger of being turned.

Germany's accomplice had met with unqualified failure. The Austrians have never been noted for success in arms, and now, true to the traditions of Wagram, Solferino and Sadowa, they met with defeat after defeat. The other member of the Triple Alliance, Italy, was only bound for a defensive war, and having no use for this war of aggression, stood aloof, with rapidly increasing sympathies for the Entente Powers. As a set-off to this, the Kaiser could congratulate himself on the active support of his friends the Turks, who were to threaten Egypt and India, and offer new battle-grounds to the forces of the Allies in a war which already extended from the coast of China to the shores of South America.

The British Empire. It is very unlikely that Germany provoked this war without calculating the chances of finding the British

Empire arrayed against her. The Germans doubtless hoped that Britain would not come in at all ; if she did, they argued, the British Army did not count, and they could smash up France and Russia before the effect of British sea-power could make itself felt. They were soon enlightened on these points. Britain stood up for the treaty which the Germans had broken, and was able to convey an army of 100,000 men across the Channel in ten days without a single casualty ; a small army, compared with Germany's millions, but a splendid fighting force, as the enemy found to their cost. Our sea-power was felt at once : German shipping was swept off the seas, and by the end of the year Germany was already beginning to feel the pinch of the blockade in a shortage of foodstuffs, copper and other necessities from abroad.

Another German delusion was that the British Empire was "played out," that India would revolt and our colonies cut themselves adrift or take no interest in the war. Never was a greater mistake made. The loyalty and enthusiasm of India and the colonies were overwhelming. Far from revolting, the Indian Princes hastened to place their services and resources at the disposal of their Emperor, and an Indian force of 70,000 men was soon actually fighting in France. The response of our Overseas Dominions was unanimous ; from all sides came offers of men, money and supplies. In November, 30,000 Canadians were already training on Salisbury Plain, while divisions from Australia and New Zealand were being formed and drilled in Egypt. The rebellion of a few malcontents in South Africa only served to show up the loyalty and devotion of thousands who had fought against us in the Boer War. Germany's colonies, on the other hand, were no help to her, and as she could send no help to them, half of them were already lost.

Britain and Her Allies. England had not had war at her doors since the time of Napoleon, and the outbreak caused rather more than a mild sensation. Our "Two-Power" Navy and large Territorial Force were competent to deal with an invasion, but we were not prepared to take a leading part in a continental war. There was a call to arms, and by Christmas half a million men of the "New Armies" were in training, while several Territorial battalions were already in the fighting line. With Lord Kitchener at home and Sir John French at the front it was confidently expected that the traditions of the "First Seven Divisions" would be maintained during the coming year by our large volunteer army.

In some ways the effects of the war were rather curious. After a quite unnecessary food panic the nation settled down to "business as usual." A strict Censorship was established, and meagre news

was doled out to the papers by a "Press Bureau." As they had to give the public something to read, a race of war-prophets and military experts sprang up, whose fanciful articles and unconvincing diagrams were eagerly swallowed by the man in the street. The lack of reliable news led to the circulation of strange war-rumours, which were accepted with extraordinary credulity. German spies, the mortal illnesses of the Kaiser, the frequent deaths of the Crown Prince, and the shooting of well-known personages in the Tower were favourite subjects, but the most wonderful of all was the "Great Russian Myth"; quite half the population was ready to swear that a large Russian army was passing through England at dead of night, en route for the Western Front. The French Censorship was even stricter than ours; this was to be no war for the glorification of generals, and the names of De Castelnau, Foch and Sarraill only leaked out gradually; those who made mistakes were ruthlessly "scrapped" by General Joffre. Russian successes were heard of at once, and "no news" generally meant bad news, but every confidence was felt in the Grand Duke Nicholas and the awakening of the Empire. Of our smaller Allies, Belgium was almost overrun by the enemy, but Serbia, after three invasions, was still intact.

Modern Warfare. There was much speculation as to the effect on warfare of the many inventions and improvements of the last ten or fifteen years. The increased range, precision and destructive power of modern fire-arms made it seem unlikely that two armies would ever get to close quarters without absolutely destroying each other. As it turned out, armies had never come to closer grips; the bayonet was still a deadly weapon in the hands of British infantry, and old fashions were revived by the use of hand-grenades, trench daggers and body armour. At sea our Super-Dreadnoughts had not yet had a chance, but the fast battle-cruisers had proved their effectiveness in the actions of Heligoland and the Falkland Islands. The invention and development of the submarine had placed a dangerous weapon at the disposal of the Germans, and its employment was all in their favour, as they had plenty of targets for their torpedoes, while we had practically none.

Germany so far had made little use of her vaunted Zeppelins, but relied on numerous "Taubes" and "Aviatiks," and aviators well trained in artillery observation. The French, who were the pioneers in aviation, had cleverer pilots and better machines than the Germans, but they were not properly organised for war, and few of their aeroplanes could accommodate an observer. Those famous airmen, Pégoud and Garros, performed brilliant feats in the early days, but their encounters with Zeppelins were probably based on a lively imagination. The British Flying Corps was

organised by Sir David Henderson, and after a little experience showed that it was second to none in skill and daring. The military wing was used chiefly for scouting and artillery observation, the naval wing for bombing and raiding ; as yet there was little actual fighting between machines in the air. Commander Samson, of the naval branch, operating from Dunkirk, proved such a terror to the Germans that it is said the Kaiser put a price of £1,000 on his head. Besides raids on the military bases in Belgium, some long-distance flights were successfully carried out by our naval airmen, and bombs dropped on the Zeppelin sheds at Dusseldorf and Lake Constance. Towards the end of December a squadron of seaplanes flew across the North Sea and bombed the warships and docks at Cuxhaven. All the aviators returned safely, Flight-Commander Hewlett, who was given up for lost, being picked up by a Dutch trawler.

PART II.—1915.

CHAPTER I.

THE WESTERN FRONT. SECOND BATTLE OF YPRES.

The British Line. In January the British troops holding the line south of Ypres were experiencing the worst discomforts and hardships of trench warfare. Frost and snow were followed by heavy rain, and the depth of the mud increased rapidly; the trenches were flooded and the men were standing up to their waists in water. Reinforcements were constantly arriving from England; in addition to drafts for the divisions already at the front, the newly-formed Fifth Corps, under General Sir Herbert Plumer, arrived. It consisted of the 27th and 28th Divisions, composed chiefly of British regiments from India, and some Territorial battalions. At the beginning of February this Corps relieved the French troops who had taken over the trenches at Ypres from the British at the end of November. South of Ypres was the Second Corps, then the Third, the Fourth (north of Neuve Chapelle), the Indian Corps, and the First Corps (opposite La Bassée). The whole force was divided into two armies, General Sir H. Smith-Dorrien commanding the Second, or Northern Army, and General Sir Douglas Haig the First, or Southern Army. A Canadian Division, which came out in February, was fortunately moved up to Ypres.

Minor Operations. The "Flanders mud" made movement difficult, but did not altogether prevent some exciting minor operations from taking place. The first move was made by the enemy on January 25th in the neighbourhood of La Bassée, where our line joined the French. Our front trenches, south of the Canal, were blown up, but the second line, strengthened by a fortified "keep," was held firm. At the same time a violent attack was made on Givenchy, but after an hour's street fighting the enemy were all captured or killed. On the 29th the Germans made a furious attack on the "keep" with scaling ladders, but were driven off by the Sussex Regiment. Three days later the lost ground was recovered by the Irish and Coldstream Guards, when Michael O'Leary won the Victoria Cross for capturing two enemy barricades single-handed. On February 6th the Guards again distinguished themselves by driving the Germans out of the "brickstacks" south of the Canal, and a little later Princess Patricia's Canadians carried out some daring trench raids near St. Eloi.

Battle of Neuve Chapelle. With the coming of March the weather improved, and Sir John French decided to give his trench-weary soldiers the chance of a dash in the open. The immediate objective was the village of Neuve Chapelle, the capture of which would open up the road to the Aubers Ridge and possibly to Lille. At 7.30 in the morning of March 10th our artillery bombardment began. For over half an hour the British guns, massed behind the lines, poured on the enemy's positions a torrent of shells such as the war had not yet seen. At 8.5 the assault was made by the 23rd and 25th Brigades of the Eighth Division and the Indians (Meerut Division). The defences south and west of Neuve Chapelle had been completely demolished, and the attack was successful, but on the north the 23rd Brigade found itself held by wire entanglements which had escaped destruction; the Scottish Rifles and Middlesex lost heavily while trying to cut the wire, but with the aid of artillery support they were able to push on. Our guns, which had already reduced Neuve Chapelle to a heap of ruins, were now cutting off the village from support by a curtain of shrapnel. The Germans made a stubborn resistance in the walled gardens and orchards, but the whole place was soon completely in our hands. Then an unfortunate delay occurred. The units had got scattered and had to be collected, and the reserves had not yet arrived, so no further advance could be made till the middle of the afternoon. This gave the Germans time to mass guns at a bridge over the stream, and at the Moulin de Pietre. No progress could be made beyond these points that evening nor all the next day; the telephone wires had been cut, and when our troops tried to move forward they came under our own shell fire. An advance was made on the 12th, and Chetwode's Cavalry Brigade was called up for a dash through, but the captured positions could not be held, and the cavalry had to retire. Our supply of ammunition—especially high-explosive shell—was now almost exhausted, and late in the afternoon Sir John French decided to suspend operations.

The three days' fighting were very costly—2,500 killed and over 10,000 wounded and missing, but the Germans' losses were heavier. The plan was well conceived and our troops, including the Indians, were splendid in the attack, which might have led to important results but for faulty staff-work, the difficulty of communicating with the artillery, and the lack of high-explosive shell. An attack was also made from Givenchy on the 10th, which was held up by wire, and the Germans undermined and blew up a mound at St. Eloi and captured the village, but it was retaken before dawn the next morning.

The French Line. General Joffre continued his policy of

"nibbling," but now and then something bigger than a nibble took place. The French were still holding Soissons and the low ground on the north bank of the Aisne. On January 8th a French Division assaulted and captured a hill marked 132, which formed a good gun position commanding the "Chemin des Dames." The Germans were annoyed, and brought up reinforcements to the number of 100,000 men. The French held on for four days; it was raining hard all the time; the river overflowed, and two of the three bridges were washed away. It was almost impossible to send help of any kind and the French Division made a skilful retirement across the river and saved some of their guns. The Germans followed up with a furious attack on Soissons, but were beaten back, and by the end of the month the position was restored. Some ground was gained by the French in Champagne between Perthes and Beauséjour, the Crown Prince attacked without success in the Argonne, and the girdle round Verdun was gradually being extended. There was stiff fighting on the Heights of the Meuse all through February and March, and early in April the French carried the crest of Les Éparges, which dominates the plain of the Woëvre. Further south the fighting was more open. The French had possession of the passes of the Vosges, and made an advance into Alsace. The struggle chiefly centred round the wooded height called Hartmannsweilerkopf, which was taken and retaken many times during the course of the year, sometimes being occupied by both French and Germans at the same time.

Hill 60. We must now return to Ypres. After the destructive bombardment of November there followed a period of comparative calm. Many of the inhabitants returned to the deserted town, and the survivors of the British divisions which had held the salient so heroically, were relieved by the French. In April the British were again holding the trenches. South of Ypres was the Fifth Division (Second Corps), and the line was continued by the 27th and 28th Divisions of the Fifth Corps. The Canadian Division carried on as far as Langemarck, and the north of the salient, from Langemarck to Steenstraete, was held by the French Colonials. South-east of Ypres, opposite the point where the Fifth Division joined the Twenty-eighth, was a large mound of earth dignified by the name of Hill 60. This afforded such an excellent observation post for the Germans that it was decided to capture it. A mine under the hill was exploded on the evening of April 17th, and the summit was rushed by the West Kents and the King's Own Scottish Borderers. In spite of frequent counter-attacks and incessant shelling, Hill 60 was held till May 5th. The Germans retaliated by a furious bombardment of Ypres with their 42 cm. howitzers,

which killed many of the inhabitants, and completed the destruction of the beautiful old city. This was the prelude to the second Battle of Ypres.

Poison Gas. On the evening of April 22nd aeroplanes reported that thick yellow smoke could be seen issuing from the enemy trenches opposite the French lines. Soon afterwards hundreds of terrified Turcos, blue in the face and gasping for breath, were seen hurrying away from the trenches in wild confusion. The French were utterly at the mercy of this attack by asphyxiating gas; large numbers were suffocated on the spot, and the rest fled before the deadly fumes towards the Yser Canal, many dying in agony on the way. Fifty guns were abandoned, and a gap of four miles was left on the north of the salient. The Canadians, also exposed to the gas, held their ground manfully, though their left was bent back at right angles to avoid being outflanked. The Germans drove the French across the Canal, and seized Steenstraete and Het Sas. Reserves were rushed up during the night to fill the gap, and a heavy battery (2nd London) which had been behind the French lines and fallen into the hands of the enemy, was recovered by the Canadian Reserve Brigade. By 10 o'clock the next morning the Canadians were again linked up with the French on the Canal, but all the reserves had been used to fill the gap, and there were no forces available for a counter-attack.

Second Battle of Ypres. In this sensational manner began the Second Battle of Ypres, which lasted for over a month. We had lost Pilkem, and the top of the salient was driven in flat; had it not been for the splendid stand of the Canadians the Germans would have been in Ypres that night. More gas attacks were made on the following days, and we had to evacuate St. Julien. Reinforcements brought up from the south recaptured the village, but were driven back by gas. All this time our troops were suffering from continuous shelling by the enemy, to which we could make no adequate reply. Our hastily-dug trenches were soon demolished, and further retirements had to be made; by the 26th our line was south of Fortuin. The salient had now assumed a very ugly shape, and there were dangerous sags in the northern line. The French, who had been reinforced, were in the hope of restoring their original line, but as they made little progress beyond recapturing Steenstraete and Het Sas, Sir John French, at the beginning of May, decided to shorten his line, that is to say, to withdraw the eastern line about two miles nearer Ypres, and so cut off the awkward angles which were so difficult to hold.

Shortening the Line. This delicate operation was carried out with the greatest skill by General Sir Herbert Plumer, and with

the greatest coolness and steadiness on the part of the officers and men. So completely were the Germans deceived that they kept up futile gas attacks on our deserted trenches. The new line just covered Frezenberg, the Bellewaarde Woods and Hooge. Even this we found very difficult to hold. No effective protection against gas had yet been devised, and on May 5th the enemy, under cover of a gas attack, reoccupied what was left of Hill 60. On the 8th there was a violent bombardment of our positions near Frezenberg, followed by an infantry attack in mass, but our line was restored by a fine counter-charge. But Frezenberg could not be held; the enemy seemed to have an unlimited supply of high-explosive, which did deadly work in our trenches, and a further retirement had to be made on Verlorenhoek.

The 28th Division, which had fought from the beginning of the battle, and suffered severely, was now relieved in the trenches by a "Cavalry Force" under General De Lisle. Scarcely had they got in their positions than "the heaviest bombardment yet experienced" broke out, and caused a temporary retirement, though the Somerset Yeomanry actually charged and drove the enemy back at the point of the bayonet. The enemy now made a most determined attempt to rush our positions, but in a superb counter-attack the two dismounted cavalry brigades swept all before them and regained our lost trenches. The Germans made their last effort before dawn on May 24th. This time the gas was more virulent than ever; our troops were provided with respirators, but two regiments were taken by surprise and overcome by the fumes. Some ground was lost, but after a hard day's fighting under the most violent artillery fire, a new line was consolidated slightly in the rear. It was on this day that Captain Francis Grenfell, V.C., that model sportsman and cavalry officer, died a hero's death.

French Offensives in Artois. While these stirring events were going on at Ypres, the French were engaged in a powerful thrust north of Arras, the objective being the mining town of Lens. The chief German defences in this district were known as the "White Works" between Carency and La Targette, and the "Labyrinth" about three miles from Arras. They were of a complicated and ingenious description, the Labyrinth in particular being a perfect network of tunnels and intricate obstacles. The French artillery preparation was thorough. From dawn on May 9th, a thousand guns poured forth a torrent of shells on the White Works for over six hours. The defences were smashed to bits, and La Targette was stormed by the French infantry, who penetrated as far as the cemetery of Neuville St. Vaast, where a deadly struggle went on for

hours. Carency and Notre Dame de Lorette fell to the French on the following day, but they were held up at Souchez, where the sugar-refinery baffled all their efforts till the end of May. The Labyrinth was the scene of extraordinary hand to hand underground contests, but by the end of the month most of it was in the hands of the French, as was also the village of Neuville St. Vaast. As a help to this offensive, an advance was made by the British from Festubert, but our artillery preparation was insufficient, unexpected obstacles were encountered, and in spite of the gallantry of the troops engaged, the ground gained hardly compensated for the number of casualties.

Fighting in June. During May the divisions of Kitchener's New Armies, which had been equipped and trained during the winter, were arriving in France as quickly as they could be sent across. They were now relieving the hard-pressed troops in the trenches, and taking over part of the line previously held by the French. The severest fighting in June took place in the neighbourhood of Hooze and the Bellewaarde Woods, where we regained a little of our lost ground in the face of heavy shell-fire. The French offensive had come to an end, except in the Labyrinth, where the weird subterranean warfare was continued for weeks. The Crown Prince began a reckless offensive in the Argonne about the middle of June, which lasted for a month, but the few hundred yards he gained at a heavy cost were soon retaken by the French. It was in this attack that the Germans first made use of liquid fire. In the Woevre the enemy was making ineffectual efforts to retake Les Eparges, while the French made a big advance in Alsace and captured Metzeral.

CHAPTER II.

THE EASTERN FRONT. AUSTRO-GERMAN OFFENSIVE.

The Position in January. At the beginning of 1915 the Russians were holding a long line from Tilsit in the north to Czernowitz in the south. It included a piece of East Prussia, and a large part of Galicia, but half of Poland was on the wrong side of the line. The Germans were aiming at Warsaw, which was protected by the entrenchments on the Bzura and Rawka. The Russian armies in the north were under General Russky; the southern group was controlled by General Ivanoff. Large reinforcements were brought up to the front, but there was a scanty supply of equipment and munitions; there were whole regiments without rifles and batteries without shells. In Galicia Dmitrieff was still holding the line of the Donajetz, and Przemyśl was on the point of falling from day

to day. Brusiloff was operating in the Carpathian Passes, and a small Russian force was pushing into the Bukovina.

German Failures in February. Von Hindenburg had complete control of all the German and Austrian armies, but Von Mackensen actually commanded in Poland, and it soon became evident that he was meditating a frontal attack on Warsaw. After a tremendous bombardment of the Bzura-Rawka lines, an assault was made in great force on February 1st. The defences were pierced at Borzymov, and the Russians retreated five miles. But the onslaught soon spent itself, and reinforcements arriving for the Russians, Von Mackensen was driven back with enormous loss. About the same time an advance was made from the Masurian Lakes, where a weak Russian army hastily retired over the frontier. The Germans were aiming at the railway from Warsaw to Petrograd, which crosses the Niemen at Grodno; they took Suvalki and Augustovo, and their advance guards actually crossed the river at certain points, but they could not get a hold on the eastern bank, and once more they were driven back through the forests to the frontier. The third attack was on Prasnysh and the line of the Narev. Prasnysh was captured, and there seemed nothing to bar an advance on the Narev and the Warsaw railway. But a single Russian division held up the German right for two days, when reinforcements arrived, which, for want of ammunition, went for the enemy with bombs and bayonets. The Germans were driven through Prasnysh and had to fall back on their original positions.

The Carpathian Passes. In the south the Russian plan was to hold the passes while they advanced on Cracow, and, if possible, to force their way through the Carpathians to the plains of Hungary. In January Brusiloff was holding the Dukla and Lupkow Passes, but they were blocked by the enemy on the southern slopes. The Austrians were naturally anxious to save Hungary, and also wanted the passes for an advance to the relief of Przemyśl. For that purpose they massed large forces south of the Carpathians, and a move was made about January 20th. There was a bitter struggle for the passes in blinding snowstorms. The left Austrian army made little progress against the Dukla and Lupkow. The centre (Von Linsingen) crossed the Carpathians and was advancing on Stryj, when it was brought to a standstill by Brusiloff on the northern slopes. The right (Von Pflanzer) had an easier task against the weak Russian force in the Bukovina. The Kirlababa Pass was recaptured on January 23rd: Von Pflanzer then wheeled north, retook Czernowitz on February 18th, and by the end of the month was at Stanislaw, but on March 3rd Russian reinforcements came

up and he was pushed back to Kolomea. In the middle of March the Austrian offensive was held up all along the line of the Carpathians.

Surrender of Przemyśl. At last Przemyśl fell to the Russians. It had been invested since September 22nd, with the exception of three weeks in October—November, when the siege was raised, and the Austrians had a chance of strengthening the defences, of which they took little advantage. For a long time the civilian population and the soldiers had been suffering from starvation, but it was not until the Austrian officers began to feel the pinch of hunger that the city surrendered. A last futile sortie was made on March 14th by Hungarian regiments, but they were beaten back with the loss of 4,000 prisoners. Then loud explosions were heard; General Kusmanik was blowing up the bridges and destroying his guns, works and munitions. The white flag was hoisted on March 22nd; 120,000 Austrians laid down their arms and the spoil included over 1,000 guns (mostly damaged). The defence of Przemyśl does not reflect any particular glory on the Austrians. The garrison was larger than the investing force and greatly superior in artillery and munitions; the Russian shells hardly reached the town. The defenders, or at any rate, the officers, never felt the usual hardships of a siege till just before the end; in fact they had a much more comfortable time than their comrades fighting in the blizzards of the Carpathians.

Von Mackensen's Great Offensive. There are three rivers flowing northwards from the Carpathians to the Vistula; the Donajetz, the Wisloka and the San. The Russian general, Dmitrieff, was entrenched on the most westerly of these, the Donajetz, and its tributary, the Biala. He was not expecting an attack; he had no reserves handy and no prepared positions to which he could retire in case of need. But Von Mackensen was massing a huge army on the western borders of Galicia, and his preparations were made with such secrecy that when the blow fell, the Russians were completely taken by surprise. On April 28th, Dmitrieff found himself faced by Von Mackensen at the head of an army of half a million men. The Russian defences were knocked to pieces by the fire from 1,500 guns; the Germans and Austrians forced the passage of the Biala, and Dmitrieff retreated to the Wisloka. Here, with the help of reinforcements, he made a stand for five days and was then forced back on the Wistok, a tributary of the San, hard pressed by the enemy. By this time Ivanoff had recognised the danger threatening his armies, south of the Vistula. There were nearly a million Austrians along the Carpathians, and as Dmitrieff retreated, Brusiloff's position at the passes became

extremely precarious. He had to abandon the Dukla and Lupkow, and by a splendid fighting retreat he regained touch with Dmitrieff.

Battle of the San. By May 12th the Russians were back to the San. Evert's army, north of the Vistula, had retired before Von Woyrsch, keeping in line with Dmitrieff, who was covering Jaroslav and Przemyśl. Brusiloff was on the Dniester, facing the Austrians. Two days later Jaroslav fell. Ivanoff now judged that the time had come for counter attacks. Evert fell on Von Woyrsch with the bayonet, and drove him back with severe loss, the Archduke Joseph Ferdinand was pushed from the San, and Von Pflanzer forced back from the Dniester. But Von Mackensen had now got his full strength up, and was concentrating his efforts against Przemyśl. North and south of the city the Russians were driven back from the San, and the salient round Przemyśl soon assumed the shape of a horse-shoe. Ivanoff held on till he had removed or destroyed everything of military value in the fortress, and then decided to withdraw. The northern forts were lost on May 31st, and the same day Von Linsingen occupied Stryj. The southern forts fell on June 2nd, and next day Von Mackensen restored Przemyśl to his Austrian allies.

Russians Lose Lemberg. The Russians were now retreating east of the San, but far from being destroyed or separated, Ivanoff's armies were still in touch and full of fight. Von Linsingen was over the Dniester and advancing on Lemberg when he was attacked by Brusiloff and driven back across the river. But this made little difference, as Von Mackensen was carrying everything before him, and the Russians found themselves in those same Grodek lines from which they had ousted the Austrians in September. Lakes and marshes made the position almost impregnable, but it could be turned, as it had been turned before by General Russky, and Von Mackensen turned it by a victory at Rawa Russka on June 20th. The way to Lemberg was now open; the Russians fell back and abandoned the city, and by the courtesy of their German leader the Austrians marched in. Von Mackensen did not waste time at Lemberg, but wheeling his army northwards, in the last week in June was advancing rapidly towards the important railway which runs from Warsaw through Ivangorod, Lublin and Cholm to Kiev.

Serious Position at the End of June. While the Austro-German offensive was meeting with such success in Galicia, Von Hindenburg had made progress in the north, where Alexeieff had succeeded Russky in the command of the Russian armies. A push was made up the Baltic coast, and Libau was reached on May 9th. At the end of the month the Germans were advancing on Windau and

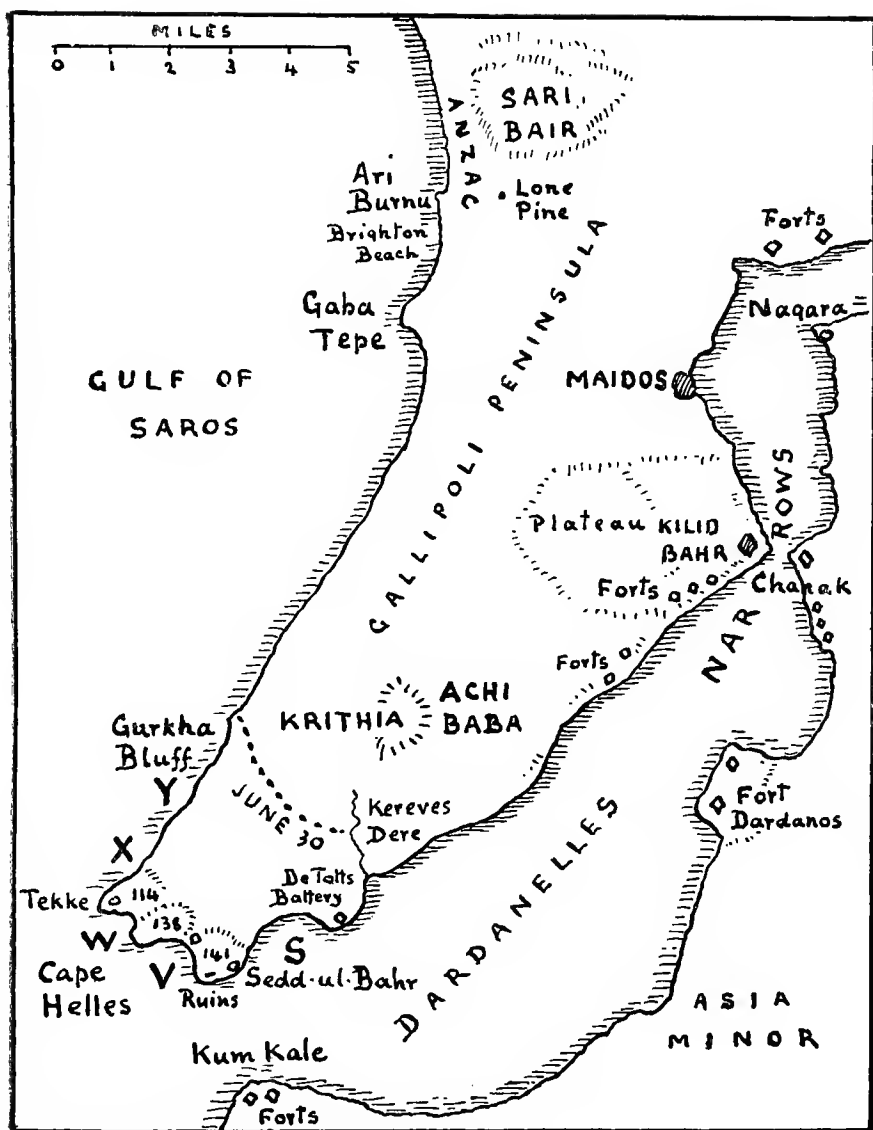
Mitau, and were getting dangerously near to Kovno and Grodno, and the Warsaw-Petrograd railway. The Russians still clung to the Bzura-Rawka lines, but the Warsaw salient was getting more and more pronounced, as the German pincers closed from north and south. The Grand Duke Nicholas had a difficult problem in front of him, but the story of how Warsaw was lost and the army was saved must be left for another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE DARDANELLES.

The Attack on the Forts. When Turkey became hostile in the autumn of 1914 we could no longer communicate with Russia by way of the Dardanelles. If we had taken the matter in hand at once, we could easily have forced a passage; as a matter of fact, our ships bombarded the forts for a short time on November 3rd, and parties of bluejackets landed and wandered about on the peninsula without opposition. But during the winter the Turks, with German help, had been hard at work on the fortifications, and when we tried to get through in the spring of 1915, at the request of Russia, the difficulties were found to be immense, and, as it proved, insuperable. On February 19th, some British and French battleships bombarded the forts at the entrance to the straits, situated at Cape Helles and Kum Kale. They were apparently seriously damaged, but on our ships steaming within range they opened a heavy fire, and we had to withdraw. The attack was resumed on February 25th. This time the *Queen Elizabeth* was in action, with her eight 15in. guns. The forts at the entrance were soon silenced, but a lot of mine-sweeping had to be done before our ships could enter the straits.

The Narrows. About twelve miles from the entrance of the Dardanelles the distance between the shores is less than a mile. Here it was, between the ancient cities of Sestos and Abydos, that Leander accomplished his famous swimming feat, and that Xerxes crossed the Hellespont, as it was then called, with his enormous army for the invasion of Greece. This passage is known as "The Narrows," and the forts on either side are of exceptional strength and weight of armament. The attack on The Narrows commenced on March 4th. British and French battleships of old types steamed up the straits and bombarded the nearest forts. The *Amethyst*, a light cruiser protecting the mine-sweepers, actually made a dash through The Narrows. The *Queen Elizabeth* was in the Gulf of Saros, firing over the peninsula, and dropping her 1,800lb. shells on the forts of Chanak and Kilid Bahr from a range of 21,000 yards.



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Gallipoli Peninsula.

Admiral de Robeck took over command from Admiral Carden on the 16th, and two days later came the great attempt to force The Narrows. Two thousand shells were fired by the twelve British ships (which included the *Inflexible* and *Queen Elizabeth*) and the four French ships. Some of the forts were put out of action, but others returned a hot fire, and two or three of our ships were rather badly hit. But there was a greater danger than shells, namely, the mines drifting down with the strong current. A French battleship, the *Bouvet*, struck one of these, and went down in three minutes, with nearly all her crew. A little later the *Irresistible* was seen to be in difficulties, and sank an hour and a half later; soon afterwards the *Ocean* also struck a mine, and went down very quickly. Fortunately the crews of these two ships were rescued by destroyers under a heavy fire. The fleet now withdrew from the straits, and owing to gales and the danger from drifting mines, the attempt was not renewed on a big scale, though the various forts were bombarded at intervals.

The Expeditionary Force. It had already been decided to send a military force for operations on the Gallipoli Peninsula. The command was entrusted to General Sir Ian Hamilton, a capable and experienced soldier, whose picturesque despatches give a vivid impression of the landing and fighting on the shore. His force consisted of the 29th Division, the Australia and New Zealand Corps, East Lancs. Territorial Division, and part of the Royal Naval Division. A French Corps (chiefly Colonials), under General d'Amade, was also at his disposal. Sir Ian arrived on the scene just in time to witness the "stupendous" attack on The Narrows. He made a survey of the whole Peninsula from the Bulair Lines to Cape Helles, and noted three dominant features, the rugged height called Saribair, the hill of Achi Baba, and the plateau of Kilid Bahr. On returning to Mudros (his Headquarters on the Island of Lemnos), he found his troops were not properly distributed for the landing, and they had to be sent to Egypt to be re-arranged. After a month's delay the transports were back at Mudros and the curtain was ready to rise on the first act of the tragedy of the Dardanelles.

The Landings. Several beaches, marked S., V., W., X. and Y., were chosen for the landings. S. and Y. beaches were mainly to protect the flanks of V. W. and X. The Australians were to land further north, near Gaba Tepe. On April 29th the transports carrying the covering force of the 29th Division arrived off Tenedos and the troops were transferred to warships and "fleet-sweepers," which approached the shore towards midnight, covered by the 3rd squadron, and towing numbers of small boats. The sea was as smooth as glass and the enemy showed no sign of life. At 5 o'clock

the warships bombarded the beaches, and the troops were transferred to the boats. The South Wales Borderers landed at S. beach without difficulty, and won the high ground near De Tott's Battery at a cost of 50 men. The K.O.S.B. were equally successful on the narrow strip called Y. beach, where they entrenched, but later in the day they were heavily shelled and attacked by large numbers of Turks. They made repeated counter-attacks with the bayonet, and after losing half their number were ordered to re-embark. At X. beach the Royal Fusiliers made good their landing under the guns of the *Implacable*, and advanced on Hill 114. On being reinforced by two more battalions they entrenched half a mile from the beach.

The Turks had turned beach W. into a veritable death trap. "Barbed-wire in the shallow water, land-mines and sea-mines, hidden trenches, machine-guns cunningly tucked away into holes in the cliff," nothing was wanting to make a landing impossible. But the Lancashire Fusiliers accomplished it. "Towed by eight picket-boats in line abreast, each picket-boat pulling four ship's cutters" they approached the silent and apparently deserted shore, "but as soon as the first boat touched the ground, a hurricane of lead swept over the battalion. Gallantly led by the officers the Fusiliers literally hurled themselves ashore, and fired at from right, left and centre commenced hacking their way through the wire." They were "mown down as by a scythe," but those who survived broke down the entanglements, reformed under the cliffs, and eventually joined the troops on Hill 114. More battalions followed during the day, and by evening an entrenched line had been formed from the Lighthouse to Hill 114, which was held against all counter-attacks all through the night.

The "River Clyde." The landing at V. beach was one of the most dramatic incidents of the war. The leading part in it was played by a collier called the *River Clyde*, which had been specially prepared for the occasion. Two thousand men belonging to the Munster and Dublin Fusiliers and the Hants Regiment were packed on board and holes were cut in the sides for their exit when the moment arrived. Three companies of the Dublin Fusiliers were to be landed from boats, and the living freight of the *River Clyde* was to disembark over a gangway of lighters. All was quiet as the boats and the collier approached the shore. But as the first boat touched the land a "tornado of fire" swept over the beach. One boat was sunk, the other destroyed and its occupants shot down or drowned, except a few who managed to reach a little sandbank which ran along the shore. The *River Clyde* grounded, and the Munsters tried to cross by the lighters; three times they were

carried away by the current and three times brought back into position by Captain Unwin and other naval officers, working up to their waists in water, and under a deadly fire. A few of the Munsters reached the sandbank, but the lighters, crowded with men, again drifted away, this time into deep water. A thousand men remained shut up in the collier, and the survivors on land lay all day huddled behind the sandbank. Some of the troops on the *River Clyde* were landed under cover of darkness, but it was obvious that the position on the beach, swept as it was by fire from the old fort of Sedd-ul-Bahr and other ruins on the heights, would become absolutely unbearable at daylight. A gallant staff-officer, Colonel Doughty-Wylie, gathered together the scattered groups, and putting himself at their head, led a daring dash for the heights, supported by gun-fire from the *Albion*. The village of Sedd-ul-Bahr was rushed, and the hill with the old castle on the top was stormed, but Colonel Doughty-Wylie was killed at the moment of victory; the hill was called after his name, and he was deservedly awarded the V.C., as was also Captain Unwin, for his coolness and bravery at the landing.

"Anzacs" at Gaba Tepe. Early in the morning of April 25th a landing was effected near Gaba Tepe by the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps, henceforth to be known by the shorter but more famous name of "Anzac." The landing was actually made at a spot a mile to the north of the spot selected, which was lucky, as the Turks had made no preparations to receive them there. But as they neared land a battalion of Turks was seen running to the beach, and opened fire on the boats, but the Australians kept quiet. The moment the boats touched the land the Australians' turn had come. "Like lightning they leapt ashore, and each man as he did so went straight as his bayonet at the enemy. So vigorous was the onslaught that the Turks made no attempt to withstand it, but fled from ridge to ridge pursued by the Australian infantry." By 2 p.m. twelve thousand men had been landed. These pressed forward, but were met with resistance by strong Turkish reinforcements. Positions were won at the point of the bayonet, and a firm line held for the night. The rest of the Corps followed, and a brigade of R.N.D.

The Advance. Next day the French Corps was brought across from Kum Kale and landed at V. beach. On the 27th Sir Ian Hamilton ordered a general advance, and that night the line stretched across the toe of the peninsula. It was decided to push on at dawn. The objective was the hill of Achi Baba, the 29th Division (left and centre) to advance on Krithia, and the French (right) on the Kereves Dere. The difficulty of the task soon became apparent.

The Turks had taken every advantage of the natural features of the ground and strengthened them with defensive works well-concealed and ingenious. This made progress very slow, and ammunition running short, all hopes of reaching Achi Baba had to be abandoned for the present. The spirited resistance of the enemy was somewhat of a surprise. The Turk had always been known as a stubborn enemy behind defences, but we were hardly prepared for the terrific and repeated counter-attacks of which he now seemed capable. The Senegalese, in the French Corps, fell back before them, and the gap was filled up by the Worcesters. Next day our counter-offensive was too much for the Turks. "At first we had them fairly on the run, and had it not been for those inventions of the devil—machine-guns and barbed wire—we should not have stopped short of the crest of Achi Baba."

The Three Days Battle. Reinforcements now began to arrive—Australians, Indians, a Naval Brigade, and part of the East Lancs Division. The attack was renewed on May 6th, but little progress was made that day. On the 7th a clump of fir trees, which had proved a costly obstacle, was cleared of machine-guns and snipers by the Royal Scots, and "the surroundings became much healthier." The Turks, however, did not approve of this salubrious state of affairs, and twice recaptured the clump, only to be driven out by British bayonets. The battle reached its climax on the third day when, in spite of their exhaustion, the troops responded gallantly to Sir Ian's call for an attack all along the line. An advance was made on Krithia in face of a storm of shrapnel and high-explosives which made the battle-field as dark as night. The Anzacs got beyond the Turkish machine-guns and suffered heavily from flank-fire, and after midnight the 87th Brigade, at its own request, was led forward for a final charge. Though we did not reach Krithia, we had gained 500 yards, and the French had reached the edge of Kereves Dere.

Local Efforts. This last advance had proved so costly and exhausting in proportion to the gain that our troops now entrenched, and the fighting for some time was confined to local efforts at various points in the line. As an instance a fine feat by the Gurkhas may be quoted. The Turks had a powerful bastion on a cliff, which had defied attempts at capture. Two companies of the Gurkhas scaled the cliff from the shore by night, and carried the work with a rush; the cliff was afterwards known as "Gurkha Bluff." At Anzac, the Australians and New Zealanders, under Sir W. Birdwood, were full of enterprise and push, and though their positions were shelled night and day, were constantly making raids on the Turkish trenches. They had 30,000 Turks against

them, personally commanded by the German general, Liman von Sanders. The hottest fighting took place round a position known as Quinn's Post, where a lot of sapping and mining was carried on. Quinn's Post was blown up by the Turks on May 29th, and in leading his battalion to recapture it Major Quinn was killed. The Turks were thrown into such confusion by this attack that they bombed their own trenches by mistake.

Fighting in June. On June 4th there was another advance all along the line, supported by a demonstration from Anzac. The French rushed a redoubt they called the "Haricot," which had resisted all their previous efforts. Our centre cleared the trenches in front of them, but the left was checked by unbroken wire. Before night the French lost their hold and fell back, which necessitated a retirement on the whole line, leaving a net gain of 300 yards on a three mile front. On June 21st the French made another attack, and at the third attempt carried the positions in front of them. A week later the 29th Division made a big push along the coast and captured five lines of trenches, which they held against all counter-attacks. Enver-Pasha, the Turkish Commander-in-Chief, now issued an order that the British were to be driven into the sea. At the end of June he tried it on the Anzacs, who refused to be moved in that direction.

Difficulties of the Position. By this time it was fairly obvious that we were held up on the peninsula, and the position was becoming intolerable. The country was arid and bleak, there were no roads, and there was no place of rest behind the lines out of range of the enemy's guns—even soldiers bathing from the beaches were killed by shell-fire. The heat was intense, the insects particularly troublesome, and the water supply totally inadequate. The difficulties of transport had been increased by the appearance of enemy submarines, and all supplies had to be brought from Mudros in small shallow boats. But the spirits of our soldiers never wavered; inspired by leaders like Birdwood, "the soul of Anzac," and General Hunter Weston, the troops not only endured all the hardships without complaining, but made light of their misfortunes with a cheerfulness beyond belief. Sir Ian Hamilton relates a characteristic incident: "The central telegraph office at Cape Helles (a dug-out) was struck by a high-explosive shell. The officer on duty and twelve other ranks were killed or wounded, and the office entirely demolished. But Corporal Walker, Royal Engineers, although much shaken, repaired the damage, collected men, and within thirty-five minutes re-opened communications by apologising for the incident, and by saying he required no assistance."

Work of the Navy. "The Royal Navy has been both Father

and Mother to the Army," writes Sir Ian Hamilton, in an outburst of gratitude to Admirals de Robeck and Wemyss and the officers and men of the Fleet. Without the devoted assistance of the Navy no landings could have been made at all, and the subsequent advance was only accomplished under the covering fire from the ships. When enemy submarines appeared, the *Queen Elizabeth* and the other new ships were sent home, but our "surplus fleet," as Mr. Winston Churchill called it, carried on the good work. Three old battle-ships were lost: the *Goliath* was sunk by destroyers on May 12th with a loss of 500 men, and a fortnight later the *Triumph* and *Majestic* were torpedoed by U21. Two of our submarine exploits must be mentioned. E14 (Commander Boyle) dived through the Straits on April 27th and spent several days in the Sea of Marmora, torpedoing Turkish gun-boats and transports. E11 (Commander Nasmyth) on May 25th created a panic in Constantinople by popping up in the Bosphorus and torpedoing a transport lying alongside the arsenal; he sank some others on his way back. Both these commanders were awarded the Victoria Cross.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WESTERN FRONT. BATTLE OF LOOS.

Fighting at Hooge. During the summer the most "unhealthy" spot on the British line was the neighbourhood of Hooge and the Bellewaarde Lake. We had been unable to hold our positions there against the heavy shell-fire constantly poured on our trenches, and in July our line ran south of the village, but covered the "Sanctuary" and "Zouave" Woods. In the No-Man's Land between the lines was a huge hole in the ground made by an exploded mine. The fighting chiefly centred round this "crater," and it changed hands several times, as it was very difficult to hold. On July 30th the Germans sprang a nasty surprise on us. They attacked with liquid fire squirted from jets and following up with bombs at close quarters, they seized the "crater," and we retired to our second line. A hasty counter-attack was mown down by their artillery and machine-gun fire. But a more carefully planned attack was prepared and launched at dawn on August 9th. The bayonet charge of the Sixth Division was irresistible; the Crater was swept clear of the enemy; the redoubt near Bellewaarde Farm was taken by assault, and the Germans pushed back as far as the Chateau of Hooge.

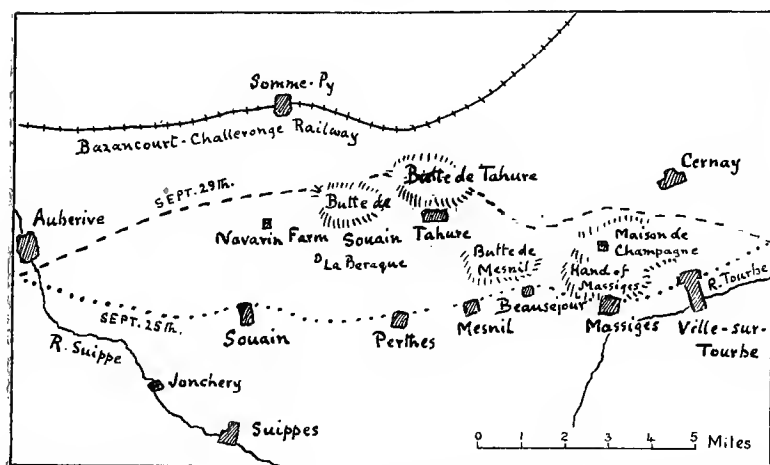
The Autumn Offensive. For six weeks there was a lull in the fighting, except for the continuous shelling, mining and bombing

in which we gradually gained the upper hand. General Joffre and Sir John French were busy planning a combined offensive on a big scale. The difficulties of this operation had been discovered and lessons learnt by the British at Festubert and the French in Artois. The German defences were much more elaborate and complicated than ours. Their trenches were linked up by formidable redoubts bristling with machine-guns, so that it was necessary, after taking the trenches, to reduce these almost impregnable fortresses before a further advance could be made. But the conditions had changed in our favour since the spring. Thanks to the energy of Mr. Lloyd George as Minister of Munitions, our output of shells had increased enormously, so that there was no longer that fatal shortage which had nullified our efforts at Festubert and Neuve Chapelle. Nor were men wanting. The "First Hundred Thousand" of Kitchener's New Armies had come over in the summer—some of them had taken a leading part in the fighting at Hooge, and new divisions were constantly arriving. We had been able to take over thirty miles of the line from somewhere south of Arras to the river Somme. This was held by our Third Army, under General Sir Charles Monro. The Second Army (Ypres to Armentières) was now commanded by Sir Herbert Plumer, and the First Army, under Sir Douglas Haig, reached as far south as Grenay, opposite Lens. It was decided that two big attacks should be made, one by the French in Champagne, the other by the British south of La Bassée, supported by D'Urbal's army from Arras.

French Advance in Champagne. We will first deal with the French attack. The sector chosen was a line of about 15 miles between Auberive and Ville sur Tourbe; the objective an important railway held by the Germans some five or six miles distant. The enemy defences in this district were a work of art; the French aviators had made a perfect map of every trench and sap and obstacle, and the official account says they had the appearance of a "wirework chessboard." The French had accumulated huge stocks of shells, and their artillery preparation was terrific. It began on September 22nd and went on day and night. The Germans themselves said, "No human being could stand it—men were dropping like flies—the trenches were a heap of ruins." The railway was shelled, and no supports, supplies or munitions could be sent to the men in front, dying of hunger or buried alive in the dug-outs.

The French infantry "went over the top" at 9.15 a.m. on September 25th; they dashed across the open with all their famous *élan*, and rushed the enemy front-line trenches. In some places the pace was astonishing: north of Souain three kilometres were

covered in 45 minutes, and Navarin Farm was reached at 10 o'clock. La Baraque and Tron Bricot were stormed by a fierce charge of the Colonials, under General Marchand of Fashoda fame, who was wounded. But the most brilliant success was north-east of Beauséjour, where the heights of Massige were scaled and carried. At some points the French reached the German second line so quickly that officers were surprised asleep in their dug-outs; but at other points the attack was held up by concealed machine-gun fire from the flanks, particularly at the Butte de Mesnil. After the first surprise the progress was much slower, but after five days' fighting the French had advanced a kilometre beyond Navarin



Champagne.

Farm, had seized the Butte de Souain, Tahure Village and the Butte de Mesnil, and bombed the enemy from the Heights of Massige. They never quite reached the railway, the farthest limit being the Butte de Tahure. They had, however, given the enemy a terrible shock, and completely wrecked his defences. The total German casualties were reckoned at 140,000. The capture of 25,000 prisoners and 150 guns was on the scale of Austerlitz and Jena.

Battle of Loos. On the same day (September 25th) Sir Douglas Haig launched the First and Fourth Corps against the German positions between La Bassée and Lens. No mistake was made

about the artillery preparation this time ; it began on the 23rd, and the German front line was in most places totally wiped out. We will first deal with the attack of the Fourth Corps (General Rawlinson), which had, as its objective, the mining village of Loos. The 47th Division (London Territorials) on the extreme right, where our line joined up with the French, dashed over the parapet at 6.30 a.m., the London Irish dribbling a football as they charged. A large slag-heap, called the "Double Crassier," was the first object seized, and, rushing on, the Division was soon driving the enemy from the cemetery, enclosures and chalk-pits south of Loos, eventually arriving at the curious erection which our soldiers called the "Tower Bridge," a familiar landmark for miles around. The 15th Division (Scottish battalions of the New Armies) went straight for Loos, charged through the village and far beyond it to Hill 70 and a pit marked 14 bis. But they had gone too far, and with their flanks exposed, and no support at hand, could not retain the positions their impetuous valour had gained. The First Division met with failure and success ; the right brigade was held up by unexpected obstacles and made little progress till the afternoon, but the left brigade did not pause till it had reached the village of Hulluch, with its right flank in the air.

The chief obstacle in front of the First Corps was a formidable fortress called the Hohenzollern Redoubt, which projected several hundred yards in front of the lines. It was connected with the main positions by two trenches, which our men named "Big Willie" and "Little Willie." Another trench ran to a coal-mine and slag-heap marked Fosse 8, and the surrounding area could be swept by machine-gun fire on all sides. The Seventh Division passed south of the Redoubt, drove the enemy out of the quarries and reached Cité St. Elie, whence they turned northwards towards Haisnes. The Ninth Division had a much stiffer task ; the 26th Brigade (Highlanders) advanced on the redoubt, which they captured after a sanguinary struggle. The Camerons and Seaforths cleared the trenches, and drove the enemy out of Fosse 8, and the 27th Brigade was rushed up to support them. Further north the 28th Brigade, after clearing the German first line trenches, was held up by intact defences, and suffering severely from the guns at Auchy, had to retire with heavy loss. This left the Highlanders at Fosse 8 in a very precarious position ; they were almost surrounded, but fought desperately to maintain their hold all the next day (Sunday). The Germans brought up large reserves Bavarians and the Prussian Guard. They seized the "Willies," and penetrated the eastern side of the Hohenzollern Redoubt ; fierce fighting went on inside it, but the enemy were finally driven out. Fosse 8,

however, had to be abandoned. Both Divisions lost their commanders: General Capper (Seventh) was mortally wounded at the Quarries, and General Thesiger (Ninth) was killed in a brave attempt to restore the position at Fosse 8.

The 15th Division, which had rushed through Loos and over Hill 70, was very hard pressed on the night of the 25th. The Scottish battalions had suffered fearful casualties and lost their hold on the hill and the chalk pit. Two New Army divisions were sent into the battle next day, but could hardly hold the line under the heavy shell-fire. On the Monday the Guards' Division, commanded by the Earl of Cavan, arrived on the scene. Marching forward from Loos through the deadly fire as if on parade, the Third Brigade went straight for Hill 70 and swept the enemy over the top, the Second Brigade seized and held the chalk-pit, while the First Brigade, south of the Quarries, pushed the Germans back a mile towards Hulluch. There was a lot more fighting before the end of the month, especially round the Hohenzollern Redoubt. Loos was taken over by the French, and by October 2nd our new line was consolidated. But the Germans did not accept defeat without a final struggle. A violent attack was made all along the line with twenty-eight battalions. The hottest fighting took place at the Redoubt and the Chalk-Pit, but the Guards proved that they were as stubborn in defence as they were brilliant in attack, and the Germans left some 8,000 dead lying on the battlefield. The British casualties for the whole battle of Loos amounted to something like 45,000, including slightly wounded.

Holding Battles. When the big battle began at Loos several holding attacks were made at other points on the line, namely the Bellewaarde Woods, Bois Grenier, Neuve Chapelle and Givenchy. Nothing very substantial was gained, but they served the purpose of keeping the Germans busy and preventing them from sending reinforcements to Loos. D'Urbal's French army was to have supported us early in the morning of the 25th, but for some reason the attack was delayed till the afternoon, and little progress was made, so Loos became an ugly salient in our line. A little further south, however, between Souchez and Arras, the French achieved an important success. After a heavy bombardment they cleared the German trenches west of Souchez, and drove the last German out of the Labyrinth. Advancing the next day they crossed the river, rushed the village of Souchez, seized the German stores, and bombed the enemy out of the woods with their own grenades. Before the end of the month they had fought their way up the western slopes of the Vimy Heights and gained a footing on the crest.

Winter Fighting. As winter approached the big attacks ceased, and the troops settled down to trench warfare again. Bombing and raiding became the order of the day, or rather of the night, as darkness favoured those dangerous and exciting rushes across "No-man's Land" in which the Canadians and Gurkhas set the example. In artillery we had now the upper hand, and could put up a "barrage" of shells more deadly than anything the Germans could do. They now had to suffer what we had suffered for over a year, and at Loos they complained that our shell-fire was "murder, not fighting." As fresh troops arrived at the front we were able to release the Indian Corps which had been in the trenches for a year and had done so well at Neuve Chapelle and Festubert. The Crown Prince was still adding to his casualty list by futile attacks in the Argonne, the salient at Verdun held firm, and at the end of the year the French made a push in Alsace and definitely settled the vexed question of the Hartmannsweilerkopf.

Lord French. One more event of importance remains to be recorded. On December 15th Sir John French laid down his command. The veteran Field-Marshal had performed a task more arduous than any English general had ever been called upon to face, and he was well entitled to a rest. It is said that the famous German general, Von Moltke, once answered a flatterer: "You cannot call me a great general, for I have never conducted a retreat." Sir John French had conducted the biggest retreat in history, had turned at bay and put his pursuers to flight. He had saved the Channel Ports from the enemy, held an impregnable line against superior numbers and weight of artillery for over a year, and when the time came he had launched a successful offensive. He began with an army of 80,000 men, and left an army of ten times that number to carry on the traditions of Mons and Ypres. He was honoured with the title of Viscount French of Ypres, but his greatest reward must have been the love of the Army and the gratitude of his country. He was succeeded by a man after his own heart, Sir Douglas Haig, his trusty lieutenant in the South African War and all the hard fighting from Mons to Loos.

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT RUSSIAN RETREAT.

German Successes in July. At the beginning of July the line ran from south-west of Windau on the Baltic, forming a big loop round Warsaw, to Halicz on the Dniester. Von Mackensen was at Zamosc, and the Archduke, on his left, had reached Krasnik. The latter advancing on Lublin, was attacked by the Russians

and was driven back on Krasnik, while Von Mackensen was held up for a week at Krasnostav, about twenty miles from the railway. Von Woyrsch crossed the Vistula at Josefov and was threatening Ivangorod. North of Warsaw Prasnysch fell on July 15th, and the Germans reached the Narev, while further north a big move was being made through Courland towards the Gulf of Riga. The Grand Duke now made up his mind to sacrifice Warsaw. Preparations were begun for the evacuation on the 18th, the Bzura-Rawka line was abandoned and the army retired to the lines of Blonie, nearer the city. It was high time, for by the 20th the Germans were across the Narev, while Von Mackensen had resumed his march on the railway. Before the end of the month Von Hindenburg had almost reached the Dwina. Ivangorod had fallen, and Mackensen had cut the railway between Lublin and Cholm.

Evacuation of Warsaw. Warsaw is (or was) a city of 800,000 inhabitants, one-third of whom were Jews. It is situated on the western bank of the Vistula and was connected with the suburb of Praga by three handsome bridges. Most of the civil population had already left the doomed city when the army began to retire from the Blonie line on July 24th. For days the troops and guns were passing through Warsaw and crossing the bridges to Praga. On August 4th the rear-guard of the army got safely across to the eastern bank. Before dawn on the 5th the great bridges were blown up, and that day the capital of Poland fell into the hands of the Germans, but the army was saved. The honour of entering was given to Prince Leopold of Bavaria, an elderly general who had married the daughter of the Austrian Emperor. He seems to have behaved well to the Polish Jews who remained in the city and to have avoided any wanton destruction of property. It was now the general idea that by giving up Warsaw the Russians would straighten their line and take up a strong position at Brest Litovsk, where they could defy the enemy through the winter, but the retreat was to be continued much farther than that before a permanent stand could be made.

The Great Retreat. It would be wearisome to describe in detail this retreat; from day to day it becomes a succession of names difficult to spell and impossible to pronounce. The Russian army groups were now commanded as follows:—Alexeieff (North), Everts (Centre), Ivanoff (South). Against them they had Hindenburg (North), Prince Leopold (Centre), and Mackensen (South). The Russian plan was to resist the German pressure north and south of the big salient till their central army could make good its retreat; the German plan to separate, surround and destroy the Russian armies. There was nothing much to bar the way of Mackensen's

outflanking movement in the south, but it was hoped that the big fortresses of the Narev and Niemen would hold out for some weeks and give the Russians time to entrench themselves on the Brest Litovsk line. The Germans quickly rebridged the Vistula, and on August 12th their centre was fifty miles east of Warsaw. Mackensen was moving up rapidly from the south; on the 16th he was within twenty miles of Brest. Meanwhile the German howitzers were thundering at the fortresses. Novo Georgievsk fell on the 17th, and Kovno on the 18th, each with its garrison of 20,000 men. By the 20th Brest was almost surrounded; it was held till the 25th, when it was evacuated by the garrison. The Russian centre, no longer trusting to fortresses, was now falling back on that vast area of swamps and quagmires known as the "Pripet Marshes," a natural refuge against an invader. On September 5th another big fortress, Grodno, fell; the garrison got away, and left nothing worth having for the Germans.

The Tsar in Command. On September 5th the great retreat had gone on for a month, and the Russian armies, deficient in arms and munitions, were still unbeaten and unbroken. That day was the anniversary of the end of the retreat from Mons, and on that day the Tsar himself took over the supreme command of his armies. Alexeieff, the ablest of the Russian generals, was appointed chief of staff, and Russky, recovered from his illness, returned to command the armies of the north. The Grand Duke Nicholas became Governor of the Caucasus. The limits of the retreat had not yet been reached, but already the prospects of the Russians were looking rather brighter. Counter-attacks became more frequent, and a fine stand was made at Vilna against Von Eichhorn. The Germans suffered severe losses in this fighting, and it was not till the Russians were almost surrounded by the German cavalry that it was decided to abandon Vilna. This was done on September 18th, and the army got away safely along the high road and railway to Minsk. There was heavy fighting in this retreat all the way to Novo Grodek. Mackensen had now taken over the German centre, and advancing slowly through the treacherous marshes, was east of Pinsk before the end of the month. It will now be convenient to divide the rest of the fighting into two sectors, (a) Hindenburg's attack on Riga and the Dwina, (b) the struggle on the Styr and the Strypa.

The Dwina. It will be remembered that Hindenburg was making a big push up the Baltic Coast in June and July, and was well on his way to Riga. Mitau was occupied on August 1st and during the next fortnight the German fleet was very active in the Baltic. On the 19th some German ships entered the Gulf of Riga and tried to land a force at Pernau, but the attempt ended in

disaster, and next day Russian cruisers and destroyers drove them from the gulf. A few days later Von Below made a strong attack on the Dwina at Friedrichstadt, but though he forced the Russians across and seized the bridge, he could not effect a crossing himself.

Early in October, Hindenburg made an attempt on Dvinsk, but was held up by the Russian field-army operating amongst the lakes and woods, and after three weeks' hard fighting and the loss of 50,000 men, he had to give it up. He next turned his attention to Riga, but when he got within ten miles he was forced to retire. His attempts to cross the Dwina at various points between Riga and Friedrichstadt all ended in failure. The fighting in November was all in favour of the Russians, who had now got large supplies of shells, and after a last desperate effort to cross the Dwina, the Germans entrenched themselves for the winter.

The Styr and the Strypa. In the centre the Germans had come to a standstill; in fact, they found it convenient to retire on Pinsk. Von Mackensen departed for the Balkans, and Von Linsingen was in command of the Austro-German forces south of the Pripet from the beginning of October. Ivanoff's armies gave him no peace. Brusiloff made a big advance in the region of Volhynia; he retook Dubno and drove the Germans back across the Styr, a river which flows northwards into the Pripet. The Russians reoccupied Lutsk, but could not hold it, and Chartorysk, another town on the Styr, changed hands several times before the close of the year. Further south, Von Bothmer's army had been driven from the Sereth to the Strypa, a river flowing south to the Dniester. There was fierce but indecisive fighting on the Strypa all through October and November, but in December the Russians gradually got the upper hand. At the end of the year the line ran from Mitau, west of Dvinsk, near Pinsk, along the Styr and the Strypa to the Pruth, and east of Czernowitz.

CHAPTER VI.

GALLIPOLI.

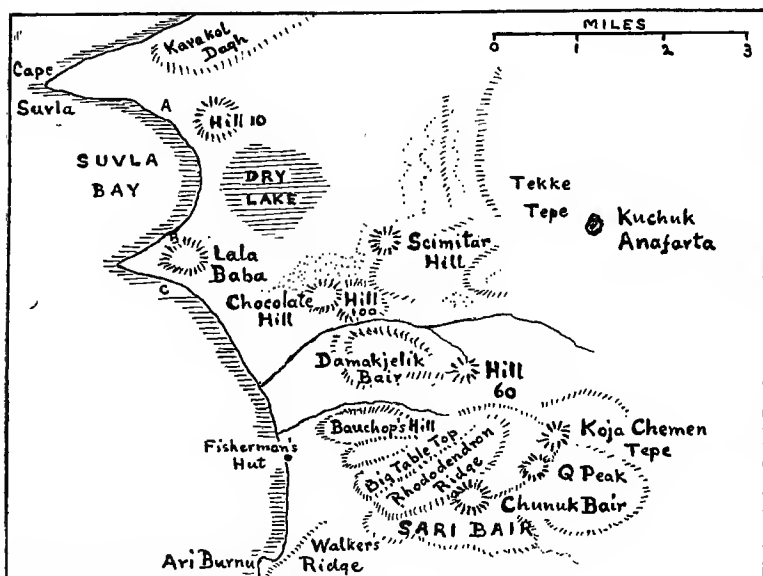
Plans for August. The "Three Days' Battle" convinced Sir Ian Hamilton that he could never win his way to the Narrows with the forces at his disposal; so he cabled home for fresh divisions. He was promised five. These began to arrive at Imbros on July 10th, and it was hoped they would all be ready for action early in August. Meanwhile Sir Ian was considering various schemes for their employment. To the amateur strategist an attack on the Bulair lines at the neck of the Peninsula seemed the most alluring, as its success would cut off the whole Turkish army. But there

were grave objections to this plan from a naval and transport point of view. The scheme decided upon was as follows :—to land a large force at Anzac, seize the heights of Sari Bair, and advance across the peninsula to Maidos on the Narrows. In conjunction with this, two divisions were to be landed at Suvla Bay, four miles north of Anzac, to support the left flank of the Anzac forces.

Preparations for the New Scheme. Surprise was to be the chief element in this scheme, and all kinds of devices and stratagems were employed to deceive John Turk and divert his attention from the main point of attack. Feints were made at various places far distant from Anzac, while the preparations for the new landing were pushed on with the greatest secrecy and despatch. Nothing was to be left to chance, and the arrangements for a supply of water were little short of marvellous. To give the Turks the impression that the blow was coming from the south, a big attack was begun from Cape Helles on August 6th. Unfortunately the Turks were also preparing an attack at the same time, and their trenches were packed with men, so the affair was not quite such a success as it might have been. This battle lasted for six days; the hardest fighting took place in and about a vineyard, which was taken, lost and retaken by the men of Lancashire. One brave Lancastrian, Lieutenant W. T. Forshaw, won the V.C. by an extraordinary display of pluck and endurance, which incidentally included forty-one hours of continuous bomb-throwing! This fighting, if it did nothing else, kept thousands of Turks away from the tremendous struggle going on at Anzac and Suvla Bay.

Anzac and Lone Pine. On the 4th, 5th and 6th of August the reinforcements for Anzac were landed so secretly and silently by night and were so carefully concealed by day that the Turks had no suspicion, though their trenches were only a few yards from the Anzac lines. General Birdwood soon had 37,000 men at his disposal. The first movement was on the extreme right against a position known as Lone Pine. The First Australian Brigade dashed across the open, forced their way through the barbed wire, and stormed the enemy trenches. These were covered with stout pine beams, which the Anzacs tore away with their hands and then leapt down on top of the struggling Turks. The survivors of the Brigade held Lone Pine for six days against the attacks of a whole division. "In one corner eight Turks and six Australians were found lying as they had bayoneted one another. To make room for the fighting men the dead were ranged in rows on either side the gangway. A thousand corpses—our own and Turkish—were dragged out from the trenches." But the affair at Lone Pine, splendid as it was, was only a diversion from the main issue :—the scaling of Sari Bair.

The Ridges of Sari Bair. Sari Bair, strictly speaking, was not a single mountain but consisted of several ridges and four peaks. Some of the ridges became known by special names, such as Big and Little Table-Top, Rhododendron-Spur and Bauchop's Hill (after the gallant Colonel of the Otago Mounted Rifles, who met his death there). The nearest peak was Chunuk Bair, which was connected by a ridge or "col" with Hill Q, while farther to the north-east was the highest point, which rejoined in the name of Koja Chemen Tepe. The attacking force, under General Godley, was



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Sari Bair and Suvla Bay.

divided into four columns, the right columns to seize the ridges and scale Chunuk Bair, the left columns to make a *détour* northwards and arrive at Koja Chemen Tepe. It was hoped that the left would be supported by the forces landing at Suvla Bay. After dark on August 6th the columns moved off. The first night's work was highly successful. Table-Top was cleared by Russell's column; its sides overhung like a mushroom and it seemed impossible to scale, but the New Zealanders did it and drove off the Turks at the

point of the bayonet. The left columns had made splendid progress and were wheeling round on Koja. Early next morning Rhododendron-Spur was captured by Johnston's column, which got into touch with the Indians of the column on their left; but no further progress was made on the 7th.

The Heights of Sari Bair. Before dawn on the 8th a successful dash was made for Chunuk Bair, led by Colonel Malone, who was killed on the summit. But Chunuk Bair proved a second Spion Kop. The 7th Gloucesters, who held the crest, lost every officer and sergeant, but they clung tight all day in little groups commanded by corporals and privates. Next day a push was made along the col to Hill Q. The crest was actually reached by the Gurkhas and South Lancashires, who were rewarded by a clear view of the Dardanelles from the summit. They pursued the retreating Turks down the farther slopes; but Baldwin's column, in support, had got into difficulties and was not there to back them up. The Turks rallied and came swarming back over the crest in overwhelming numbers. Meanwhile, the summit of Chunuk Bair was swept by a continuous hail of fire. The New Zealanders, who had fought without ceasing for three days and nights, were relieved by the Loyal North Lancashires and the Wiltshires; and these two battalions, already weakened in numbers, were almost wiped out by a tremendous attack of the Turks on the 10th. But as the dense masses of the enemy swept down the western slopes they were greeted with such a withering fire from our artillery and machine-guns that only a mere handful returned alive. Strong forces of the enemy, which Sir Ian Hamilton had hoped would have been held off by the advance from Suvla Bay, were hurled at our positions on the ridges, and the last battalion of our reserves was hurried forward into the battle. Our columns on the left, receiving no assistance from Suvla Bay, had failed to take Koja Chemen Tepe. The ridges were still in our possession, but none of the peaks. Our casualties had now reached the number of 12,000—the Thirteenth Division (New Army) alone had lost 6,000 out of 10,500. "Baldwin was gone, and all his staff—ten commanding officers had disappeared—the Warwicks and the Worcesters had lost literally every single officer. . . . The *grand coup* had not come off."

Suvla Bay. We must now turn to Suvla Bay and see why the expected support from that direction had not been forthcoming. The Ninth Corps, under General Sir F. Stopford, was to land at Suvla Bay and press forward north of Sari Bair. Under cover of darkness on the night of August 6th the three brigades of the Eleventh Division (Hammersley) sailed from Imbros and landed at three points on the shore; the Turks were taken by surprise and

only the northern landing met with any opposition. Two Yorkshire regiments stormed an elevated position called Lala Baba, while the Lancashire men drove the Turks from Hill 10, and thus both flanks were secured. The Tenth Division (Sir B. Mahon) landed the next day. General Hammersley moved forward on the right and seized "Chocolate Hill," while Mahon, after a stiff fight, occupied the ridge north of the bay.

So far the two divisions had done very well :—the landing had been a complete success and all that was required was to push on without delay. But in spite of the elaborate arrangements for a supply of water, something went wrong, and the exhausted and thirsty troops could move no further. In vain Stopford urged his generals to advance on the 8th; they declared it was impossible. Valuable time was wasted, and the beaten Turks, plucking up courage at our inaction, were bringing up their guns. Sir Ian Hamilton, hearing that the Corps battle was going wrong, left General Braithwaite in charge at Imbros and sailed for Suvla. He arrived at 5 p.m. on the 8th, and found that "inertia prevailed." "Driving power," he says, "was required, and even a certain ruthlessness, to brush away pleas for a respite for the tired troops." That evening he tried a little mild ruthlessness himself, but only one brigade (the 32nd) could be got to move, and that not till 4 a.m. on the 9th. "The golden opportunity" was now lost for ever; the Turks could no longer be taken by surprise. By this time they had prepared strong positions and were full of fight. Our difficulties were increased by the burning scrub in front of us, and Chocolate Hill became that deep brown colour to which it owed its name. The 33rd Brigade got as far as Hill 100, but the fires made the positions we gained quite untenable. The Ninth Corps was now reinforced by two new divisions, the 53rd (Territorial) and the 54th. The former advanced over the sandy plain against the main ridges on the 10th, but the difficulties were too great when they got into the scrub, and they had to retire. The 54th Division tried an attack on Teke Tepe on the 12th, and though some units reached the ridges, the main object was not achieved. It was in this battle that a company of Norfolk Territorials, recruited from the King's estates at Sandringham, charged too far through the woods and disappeared for ever.

A Final Effort. Long before this Stopford's right wing ought to have joined the columns fighting at Sari Bair and the whole force should have been well on the way to Maidos. But instead of this, Stopford's force was fighting an almost defensive battle, struggling for positions which, if won, could hardly be maintained. Anything like a general advance seemed out of the question. On

the 15th the Tenth Division attacked the hills north of the bay, but they had 20,000 Turks against them, and though the Irishmen stormed the enemy trenches with wonderful dash, they were unable to hold them. That evening General Stopford handed over his command to General De Lisle, and Sir Ian Hamilton cabled to Lord Kitchener for more troops; but as none could be spared, he moved the "incomparable" 29th Division, the veterans of the campaign, to Suvla, and called up the Second Mounted Division from Egypt.

The last great struggle took place on August 21st. It was a frontal attack by the Twenty-ninth and Eleventh Divisions on the heights beyond Chocolate Hill. The Twenty-ninth fought its way through the raging scrub-fire to the top of Scimitar Hill, but was swept off the summit by a storm of shell and musketry, and forced to take cover behind a ledge lower down the slopes. The Eleventh lost its direction and was held up by the impenetrable scrub near Hill 100. The Yeomanry Division, which was in reserve behind Lala Baba, was now called upon to reinforce, and a thrilling sight was witnessed. Sir Ian says that in spite of the critical events in other parts of the field, he could not take his glasses off these stalwart Yeomen, as they advanced on foot, with the steadiness of parade, across the mile and a half of open between Lala Baba and Chocolate Hill. "There was nothing to conceal a mouse," and these troopers suffered heavy losses before they were reformed under the cover of the hill. Lord Longford's Brigade (the Bucks, Berks and Dorset Yeomanry) was sent forward to restore the fortunes of the day. They advanced through the bush fire, joined the right of the Twenty-ninth Division and by nightfall had fought their way to what they thought was the summit of Hill 100. But this turned out to be a mistake; they found their position dominated by the fire of the Turks from the real summit, and were ordered to fall back before daylight. Three gallant cavalry leaders fell in this action:—the Earl of Longford, General Kenna, V.C., and Sir John Milbanke, V.C. On the same day an offensive was launched northwards by Anzac forces under Generals Godley and Russell, which lasted nearly a week and resulted in the capture of Hill 60, the connecting link between Sari Bair and the Suvla positions. On August 24th General Byng relieved General De Lisle of his temporary command.

The Autumn Deadlock. The ground won during August was consolidated and firmly held, but "the flow of munitions and drafts fell away," and all hope of a further advance was abandoned. Sickness became very rife amongst the troops, and threatened to cause even greater losses than the guns of the enemy. On the 11th October, Sir Ian Hamilton was asked his opinion about an evacu-

ation, but replied that such a step was "unthinkable." A commander who had not the same personal interest in the ground so desperately won was sent out to supersede him, namely, Sir Charles Monro. He gave a very unfavourable report of the situation, and though the sickness was abating, he held out no hope of any success. A terrible storm in November, which caused great suffering and loss of life, hastened a decision, and General Birdwood, who had been left in command on the spot, was instructed to prepare a scheme for the evacuation of the peninsula.

Evacuation of Gallipoli. The difficulties and dangers of this operation were enormous, and it was estimated that the losses incurred would probably amount to the strength of a whole division; but so cleverly and secretly was everything carried out that the evacuation was accomplished with one single casualty. The withdrawal began at Anzac and Suvla on December 10th. The general idea was to "carry on" as usual in the front line trenches, while men, guns and munitions were shipped away quietly by night. The final withdrawal was fixed for December 18th, and as the Turkish trenches were in some places only a few yards from ours, it was expected that there might be heavy fighting to cover the embarkation. Fortunately the sea was calm, and the Turks were deluded into the belief that we were still there after we had gone, by firing and explosions from our deserted trenches craftily arranged beforehand by means of fuses and candles. We had one man slightly wounded by a chance shot. A few old damaged guns and some mules were left behind, and a big bonfire was made of stores which it was considered advisable to abandon. The Turks imagined that this conflagration was accidental, and shelled the spot for hours to prevent us putting it out!

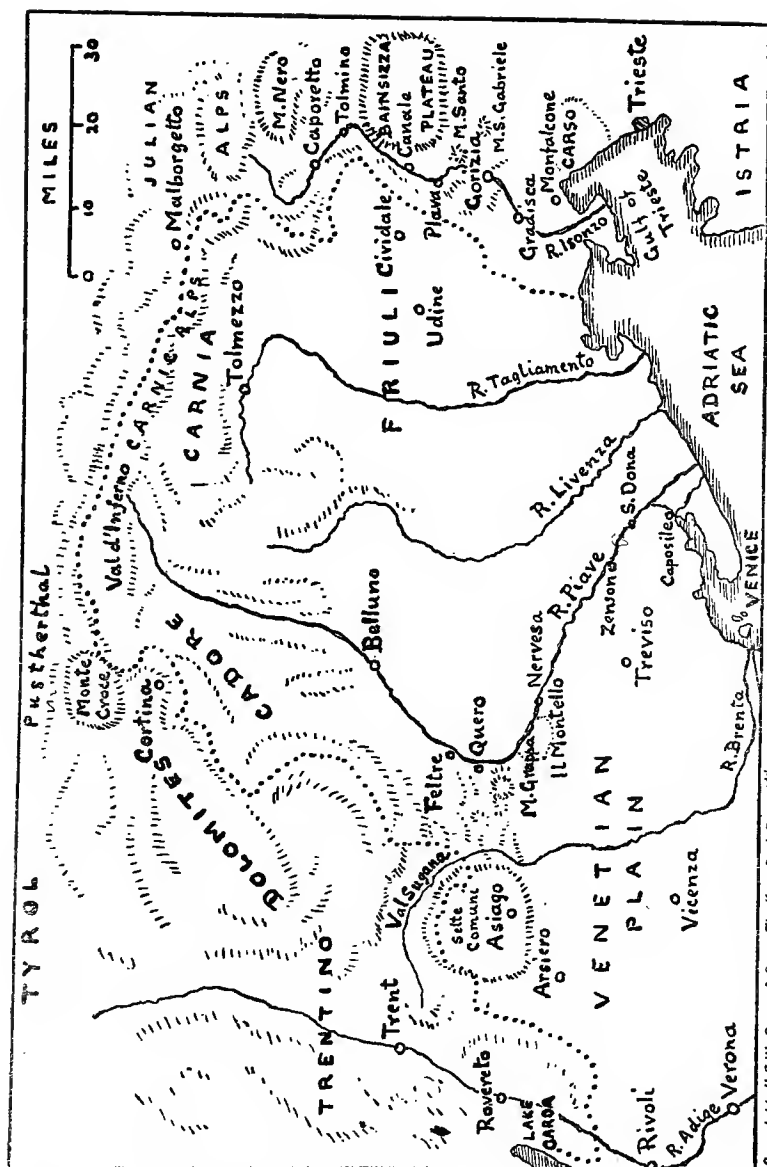
It was hardly to be hoped that the Turks would be taken in a second time, and the evacuation at Cape Helles would pass off so smoothly. And yet so it proved, though the weather nearly wrecked our plans. Four lines of defence were selected and entrenched, and the troops gradually withdrew to the beaches and embarked. The final trips were taken on the night of January 8th. A furious gale had sprung up and the heavy sea made it almost impossible to remove the last units, but the Navy rose to the occasion, as our Navy always does, and the first intimation the Turks had that we had gone was the blaze of bonfires, on which they opened a hail of shrapnel. So ends the epic of Gallipoli, the "immortal gamble" as it has been called; perhaps the most glorious failure that has ever been achieved in the history of warfare.

CHAPTER VII.

ITALY AND THE BALKANS.

Italy and Austria. From the very beginning of the war it was clear that Italy would not come in as a member of the Triple Alliance, and as time went on it became more and more probable that she would cast in her lot with the Entente Powers. The vexed question between Italy and Austria was known as "*Italia Irredenta*," that is to say, the districts "unredeemed" from Austria, namely the Trentino and Trieste, where the population consisted chiefly of Italians. By a clause in her treaty with Italy, Austria was bound to make concessions if she interfered with Serbia. She had interfered with Serbia, and the early months of 1915 were occupied with negotiations about these concessions, skilfully conducted by Baron Sonnino, the Italian Foreign Minister. The outcome was that Austria, under pressure from Germany, agreed to make certain concessions *in the future*. Italy naturally inquired what guarantee there was that they would be carried out, when Germany stepped in and offered to be responsible. This was not good enough for Italy (remembering Belgium) and she found herself "on the brink." A hitch occurred when Signor Salandria's government fell and Signor Giolitti (in favour of neutrality) tried to form a cabinet. But he failed. Salandria was recalled, and war was declared against Austria on May 23rd.

The Isonzo Front. Italy had been preparing for war all through the winter, but she was only partially mobilised and had tremendous difficulties to face. The irregular Austrian frontier was nearly 500 miles in length and the mountains formed a natural and almost impassable barrier. King Victor Emmanuel took supreme command of the Italian Armies, with General Cadorna as Chief of Staff. The main offensive was directed towards the east, with Trieste as the objective. The Austrians retired from the frontier and took up a defensive position on the line of the River Isonzo, from Monte Nero to the Adriatic Sea. By the end of May the Italian Armies were attacking the river line, the left against Monte Nero and Tolmino, the centre against the fortified town of Gorizia and the right at Monfalcone on the coast. Monfalcone fell on June 9th and the Italians found themselves up against the Carso, a barren plateau stretching along the sea-coast towards Trieste. They captured Gradisca, a town on the Isonzo, south of Gorizia; and further north they forced a crossing at Plava, but were impeded greatly by stormy weather and floods. During July great efforts were made to take Gorizia, and the western height, called Podgora, was captured. The town was gradually invested on three sides,



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The Italian Front.

but the Austrians, realising that it was the key to the whole Isonzo position, hung on like grim death. A little progress was made near Monte Nero and a footing obtained on the Carso, but the advance on Trieste was held up.

Fighting in the Mountains. The operations on the northern front were undertaken to secure Italy from invasion while she pressed her offensive on the Isonzo. The Trentino was invaded, and the Italian troops got as far as Rovereto, well on the way to Trent. The passes of the Dolomites and the Carnic Alps were forced and cleared of the enemy, and Cortina, in the Dolomites, was occupied on May 30th. The fiercest fighting in the summer months took place round Monte Croce and the Val d'Inferno, and the Italians forced their way through the rugged heights to positions which overlooked the Pusterthal, with its important railway. As winter came on the fighting amid the snowclad peaks of the Dolomites beggars description. The feats of the Italian "Alpini" were only equalled by those of the Tyrolese mountaineers. Positions which seemed almost inaccessible to human beings under the most favourable circumstances were seized and fortified; and guns, stores and munitions were hauled up the dizzy heights by means of aerial cables. No wonder progress was slow and the ground gained did not make much of a show on the map, but by Christmas the Italians had gained a footing on Austrian soil from Lake Garda to the Carso, and had the satisfaction of knowing that, for the time at least, their own country was safe from invasion.

The Adriatic. Austria was the first to strike by sea. The moment war was declared, a fleet of battleships, cruisers and destroyers steamed out of Pola and shelled the railway line which runs along the Italian coast, destroying several bridges and stations. This was combined with an air-raid on Venice, which also did serious damage. But the Italians soon got command of the Adriatic, or at least the surface of it, and the Austrian fleet was as safely bottled up at Pola as the German fleet was at Kiel and Wilhelmshaven. The Austrians confined their activities to destroyer-raids and submarine attacks, while the Italian fleet cruised at will among the Austrian islands off the coast of Dalmatia. Two or three of their ships were torpedoed, one of which bore the historic name of *Giuseppe Garibaldi*.

The Balkans. The situation in the Balkans caused much uneasiness during the summer; and early in the autumn, when Germany began massing large forces north of the Danube, it was evident that something was going to happen. The Balkan states were playing a waiting game. It had been confidently predicted that Roumania would come in with Italy, but the Russian retreat

in Galicia was not encouraging, and Roumania remained neutral. Our adventure in Gallipoli had not created a favourable impression in Greece and Bulgaria, but we still hoped, without any particular reason, that these countries might be persuaded to join the Allies. The Prime Minister of Greece, M. Venizelos, was strongly in favour of this, if the Allies would promise to send 150,000 men; but King Constantine was the Kaiser's brother-in-law, and pro-German in his sympathies. He disapproved of the policy of Venizelos, and the most we could get out of him was a promise of "benevolent neutrality," whatever that might mean.

Ferdinand of Bulgaria played his cards very craftily. He deluded the Allies till the last moment with the hope that he might be won over, but fear and self-interest inclined him towards the Germans. Indeed, he made a secret treaty with the Kaiser in July. Balkan politics were in a tangle, and the various conflicting interests provided a puzzle which the Allied diplomatists were unable to solve. The Bulgarians had some cause to be sore about the results of the Turkish War; they thought they had been badly treated in the division of the spoils, compared with Greece and Serbia. Serbia was strongly urged by the Allies to make some concessions to Bulgaria, but refused, the reason given being that by her treaty with Greece she was not allowed to cede any territory on the Greek frontier. Bulgaria mobilised in September, and Serbia, seeing herself on the point of invasion from the north and east, wished to attack the Bulgarians at once, but the Allies said "No," as Greece was only bound to support Serbia in case of invasion, and not otherwise. However, Greece got out of this by saying that it did not apply to an invasion by the Germans. The Allies now decided to act. A French Division from Gallipoli was landed at Salonika and was followed by Sir Bryan Mahon's Tenth (Irish) Division from Suvla Bay. The Greeks made a formal protest against the landing and then rendered every assistance.

Invasion of Serbia. The Kaiser was determined to crush Serbia and get possession of the railway from Belgrade to Constantinople. He is said to have promised Constantinople to Ferdinand at the end of the war as the price of his help; but it is not known whether the Turks had been consulted about this little arrangement. Serbia's position at the beginning of October seemed almost hopeless. Von Mackensen had come from the Pripet Marshes to command the two German armies threatening the northern frontier, and two Bulgarian armies were ready to strike on the eastern flank. Serbia was hoping against hope that the Allies would save her. A British Naval Brigade had been for some time at Belgrade, doing splendid work with guns and gun-

boats ; one picket-boat (Commander Kerr) had earned for itself the name of the " Terror of the Danube." But Admiral Troubridge and his gallant little band could not hold the river against two German armies. After a heavy bombardment, Belgrade was evacuated on October 9th. The Austrians crossed the Save and the Drina, and the Serbians retired fighting to the hills they had held so valiantly ten months before. The Bulgarians now began their advance in two columns on Nish and Uskub, and the Serbians could offer little opposition. Uskub fell on the 22nd, and on the 30th the Germans seized Kragujevatz, the Woolwich of Serbia. Nish was almost invested, and surrendered to the Bulgarians early in November.

Retreat of the Serbian Army. Over half of Serbia was now in possession of the enemy, and there seemed little chance of saving the rest. All that was now left for the Serbian armies, hopelessly outnumbered, worn out and short of munitions and food, was to save themselves. The northern forces retreated towards the western frontier and crossed the mountains into Montenegro. In the south there was still a ray of hope. The Allies were advancing from Salonika, and Monastir might yet be saved. The Serbians made a splendid stand at the Babuna Pass and drove the enemy back on Veles, but they could not get into touch with the French, and had to retire before Bulgarian reinforcements. Mitrovitza, Pristina and Prisrend fell into the hands of the enemy ; and not only the remains of the army, but thousands of the civilian population had now left their doomed country and were seeking refuge in the wilds of Montenegro and Albania. The winter weather had come, and their sufferings from exposure and hunger in the bleak mountain passes are beyond description. The scattered bands of soldiers were rallied at Durazzo and Scutari, and conveyed to Italy and thence to Salonika. Over 100,000 were thus saved. Old King Peter shared the hard fortunes of his soldiers, and eventually got to Brindisi in disguise. It was the irony of fate that the Kaiser's summer palace at Corfu should be used as a hospital for the sick and wounded Serbians. Monastir fell on December 5th and the conquest of Serbia was complete.

The Allies at Salonika. We must now see what the Allies had been doing to help Serbia in her distress. To be quite frank, they were too late. The two divisions landed at Salonika at the beginning of October were placed under General Sarrail, the brilliant defender of Verdun. They advanced up the Vardar, crossed the Bulgarian frontier and held a line from Krivolak to Lake Doiran ; the French on the left, the British on the right. The French pushed on towards Veles, and tried to get into touch with the Serbians, but

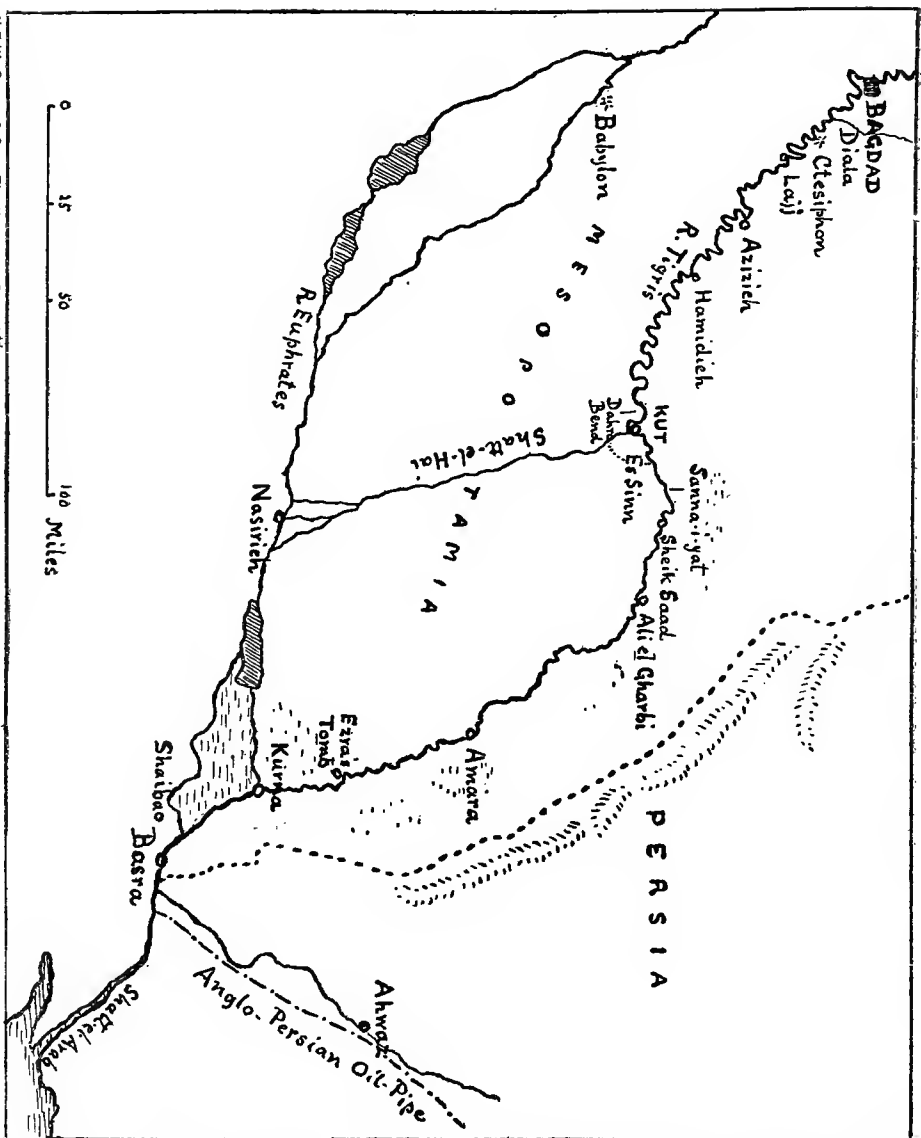
the force was too small for the purpose, and had to entrench at Kavadar. As the Serbians retreated the French had to fall back on Krivolak. While this was happening, the Bulgarians made an attack in force on the Tenth Division at Lake Doiran, but Mahon's Irishmen held their own till the French got into alignment, when a fighting retreat was made to the frontier. This was recrossed on December 12th and the Bulgarians did not follow. Nothing more could be done at present. It was decided to hold on to Salonika as a base for future operations and a rallying point for the Serbian army. Reinforcements poured in, and before the end of the year the country round Salonika had become a huge entrenched camp. But there were enemies inside the lines as well as outside, and after a big air-raid on December 30th, General Sarraill had the enemy consuls and vice-consuls seized and placed on board a French ship.

The Mystery of Montenegro. One more episode remains to complete the sad story, and though we have to encroach slightly on the year 1916, this is its proper place. Cetinje, the capital of Montenegro, is dominated by a height called Mount Lovchen, and this height was within range of the Austrian guns in the Gulf of Cattaro. At the end of December Mount Lovchen was being vigorously shelled and the Austrians were invading Montenegro from Bosnia. Mount Lovchen was stormed by the Austrians on January 7th and Cetinje had to surrender. Austria now stated that King Nicholas had submitted to her terms and made peace. But this turned out to be an "error" on the part of the enemy, as the army still continued fighting and King Nicholas left his country for France. But Montenegro had no chance, and before the end of January another little kingdom was wiped off the map of Europe.

CHAPTER VIII.

ASIA AND AFRICA.

Mesopotamia. At the beginning of 1915 the Indian Division under Sir Arthur Barrett was in possession of the port of Basra and the town of Kurna, at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates. A small force had been sent to Ahwaz for the purpose of protecting the Anglo-Persian oil-pipe. The objects of the expedition seemed to have been attained, and at that time neither the Indian Government nor the commander on the spot had any idea of a further advance. Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, paid a visit to Basra in February and expressed himself as well satisfied with the situation. But the Viceroy's satisfaction was not shared by the Turks, who evinced a decided objection to our occupation of their



territory, and made repeated attacks on our positions at Kurna and Ahwaz. They worked round to the south-west of Basra, and were beaten off by Generals Fry and Melliss; but after being routed and chased they came on again in greater numbers than ever, and it was clear that unless we occupied strong points higher up the rivers there would be no peace for our base at Basra. The situation was complicated by the Arabs, who were not even neutral, but equally troublesome to the British and the Turks. Nothing but a move forward would make any impression on these treacherous friends and cruel foes.

The Tigris and Euphrates. With the arrival of reinforcements and Sir John Nixon to take command in April the forward movement began. General Gorringe was despatched to Ahwaz, where he effectually routed the Turks, who fled across the desert to Amara. General Townshend, the defender of Chitral, began an advance up the Tigris, partly by water and partly by land. On June 3rd he entered the town of Amara with a handful of men. On the arrival of his infantry he gave battle to the Turks, who fled in the direction of Kut-el-Amara. General Gorringe, back from Ahwaz, moved up the Euphrates. The heat was intense and the country flooded, but his force pushed on and came across the Turks entrenched at Nasrieh. The attack was made on July 24th; the trenches were rushed and the Turks departed, leaving 2,000 dead and prisoners. This victory gave us the south end of the Shatt-el-Hai, a channel joining the Tigris and Euphrates, which had proved very useful as a means of communication to the Turks.

Battle of Kut-el-Amara. Townshend had gained such an easy victory at Amara that it was decided to pursue the retreating Turks and seize the town of Kut, in order to secure the north end of the Shatt-el-Hai. This was not likely to be such an easy task, as Nur-ed-Din, the Turkish commander, had gathered large forces at Kut, and our troops had to march across an arid desert intersected by old dried-up irrigation canals, while the gunboats and small craft had nearly 150 miles of winding river to navigate. The Division moved off on August 1st and on September 15th Townshend was fifteen miles from Kut. A halt was made while the Turkish positions were reconnoitred, and they were found to be very strong on both sides of the river. On the 27th Townshend advanced to the attack. Fry's Brigade was on the north bank, but the main body of the division was on the south bank, leading the Turks to suppose that our attack in force was coming against their right. But this was only a feint. A bridge of boats had been flung across the river by the engineers, and during the night, in dead silence, Delamain's and Hoghton's Brigades crossed to the north bank,

leaving only a small force to keep up the delusion of an attack on the Turkish right. At daybreak on September 28th, Fry advanced against the Turkish centre, and after a severe struggle, drove it in. Delamain moved to the right, wheeled round to the left and attacked the Turkish positions between the marshes. Hoghton made a still wider détour round the end of the marshes and crumpled up the Turkish extreme left. He then joined hands with Delamain. The two brigades, exhausted with their night-march and fighting all day in the scorching sun and burning sand, now wheeled round to take the enemy's centre in the rear, but Turkish reserves were observed coming up, and again making a change of front, the brigades fell on these with such dash that they were broken and put to flight. Next morning the whole Turkish force had disappeared and Townshend marched into Kut-el-Amara.

The Lure of Bagdad. So far the expedition had been brilliantly successful : too successful, in fact. It had already attained objects far beyond the limits of the original scheme. Our troops were now within striking distance of the heart of the Turkish Empire in Asia, and public interest was stirred. Few people at that time had heard of, or cared about Kurna and Kut-el-Amara, but even Macaulay's schoolboy was acquainted with the name of Bagdad, the city of Haroun-al-Raschid, and the "Arabian Nights." The glamour of Bagdad exercised a strong fascination and lured us on to our fate. The British Government was in want of some striking success to balance the Dardanelles failure ; the Indian Government approved of a further advance and Sir John Nixon was very optimistic. It was a prize worth trying for, but it was tempting fortune very highly. Townshend was only ninety miles from Bagdad by land, but he had to depend on his water transport for over 200 miles by the loops and twists of the Tigris. His division, reduced in numbers, contained only three British battalions, his medical staff was quite unequal to dealing with large numbers of sick and wounded, and he had already experienced the trying conditions of a desert march. But acting under instructions, he pushed on at once from Kut, and in four days his advance guard reached Azizich, half-way to Bagdad. Here he received information that the Turks were strongly entrenched at Ctesiphon, thirty miles further on. He sent word back that it was not safe to proceed unless supported by another division. Nixon sent him an infantry brigade, some cavalry and artillery, and the news that two divisions were on their way from France. Townshend moved on, and on November 21st reached Lajj, nine miles from Ctesiphon.

Battle of Ctesiphon. The ruins of Ctesiphon, the ancient capital of Parthia and Persia, stand on the east bank of the Tigris,

about twenty miles south of Bagdad. The Turks occupied two lines of entrenchments, some four or five miles apart ; and between them could be seen the ruins of the palace of the Persian kings and the wonderful arch of Chosroes, clearly outlined against the sky. After a moonlight march, Townshend found himself up against the Turkish lines. The main position was carried with a rush, and our troops dashed across the open, under heavy fire, for the second line. Several trenches were captured, but Turkish supports came up and our advance was stopped. Fresh divisions came from Bagdad during the night, and all the next day we were exposed to counter-attacks which became fiercer as the day went on. For two more days the battle went on, and though unbeaten, Townshend's little army was in a precarious position. He had lost a third of his men, and could hope for no support. His force was 300 miles from Basra, and his communications, such as they were, exposed to attack from "neutral" Arabs if things went wrong. He could not advance, he could not stay where he was ; there was nothing to be done but fall back on Lajj.

Retreat to Kut-el-Amara. Lajj offered no suitable defensive position, and it was decided to retreat to Kut-el-Amara. Our difficulties were increased by the twisting and winding of the river, which made it almost impossible to keep in touch with our transport. Our gunboats often ran aground and were exposed to the fire of the Arabs, who had now become very hostile and aggressive. The *Shaitan*, *Firefly* and *Comet* had to be abandoned, after heroic attempts had been made to save them. The land force was harassed by Turks and Arabs, and on December 1st Townshend turned at bay and drove them off. Kut was reached two days later. We had brought back 1,600 prisoners, but the captured guns were left behind. Kut, which is situated in a loop in the river, was speedily put in a state of defence, and in a few days was almost invested by the Turks, who kept up a heavy bombardment. They made desperate efforts to take the place by assault on Christmas Eve. Three times they stormed our trenches and three times were they driven out by the Oxfords and Norfolks. Then they invested Kut completely and Townshend, calm and cheery as ever, settled down to stand a siege.

The Caucasus. Enver Pasha's expedition in the Caucasus ended in a ghastly failure. Perishing with cold and hunger, a whole corps surrendered to the Russians at Sarikamish early in January, and the other two corps, after some hopeless fighting, fled back to Erzeroum and Trebizond. The frontier was soon clear of Turks, but the Russians did not rashly push their advantage too far. It was not till the Archduke Nicholas was appointed Military

Governor in September that preparations were begun for an advance in force on Erzeroum. For various reasons this was postponed till the beginning of 1916.

Egypt. The expected attack on the Suez Canal came off early in 1915. It was really quite a sporting effort on the part of the Turks. From their base at Beersheba they had to cross some 150 miles of desert, and the difficulties of transport and water-supply might have daunted a better equipped army than that of Djemal Pasha. We were quite ready for them; the Canal offered an excellent defensive position and there was no lack of troops in Egypt, under General Maxwell. The attack was made on the night of February 2nd against Ismailia and the Bitter Lakes. The Turks tried to launch the rafts and pontoons, which they had carried with them across the desert, on the canal, but they were quickly smashed up by our fire, and the attempt to cross was a complete failure. Four Turks swam the canal and actually landed on the western bank in the darkness of the night; but their heroic effort can hardly be considered a serious invasion of Egypt. Next day our troops drove the enemy back from the eastern bank, and on the 4th they were retreating across the desert. Only a sandstorm saved them from our pursuit. Roving bands still hovered round the canal in March, but were driven off by General Younghusband. The Australians, Lancashires and Yeomanry who were in training in Egypt soon had another chance of meeting the Turks in Gallipoli, and the latter were kept too busy to bother about further attacks on the Suez Canal in 1915.

South-West Africa. As soon as General Botha had crushed the last sparks of De Wet's rebellion, he turned his attention to German South-West Africa, a territory of 300,000 square miles of barren and waterless country. But Botha and his able lieutenant, General Smuts, were in no way dismayed by the magnitude and seeming impossibility of their task. The Germans had left the coast and rallied in the interior at Windhoek. Botha himself advanced from Walfisch Bay, while three columns, under Mackenzie, Van der Venter and Berrange, invaded German territory from Luderitz Bay, the Orange River and Bechuanaland. When these columns met they came under the command of General Smuts. The lack of water and the burning sand-storms made the advance very trying, even for the tough South African troops, but everything went like clockwork. A German force was rounded up at a place called Gibeon, and as the columns closed on Windhoek, a message of surrender arrived on May 12th. But most of the Germans had escaped northwards to Grootfontein, where they were followed and driven to surrender early in July. The conquest of this vast terri-

tory in less than six months was a great triumph for General Botha and his South Africans.

The Cameroons. The campaign in the Cameroons was a fine example of converging movements on a definite spot, through a country difficult by nature and deadly in climate. The forces employed, consisting chiefly of native levies, were not more than 10,000, yet the operations resulted in the conquest of a country considerably larger than Germany. We had already seized Duala and the railways in 1914; and the Germans had transferred their headquarters to Yaunde, some 150 miles inland. In the spring an advance was made on Yaunde from different directions, but the difficulties of transport and the use the Germans made of their favourite weapon, the machine-gun, brought the operations to a standstill in June. The rainy season now set in, and further movements were suspended till the autumn. In October the advance was renewed from the south by General Dobell, who held the chief command. He had two columns under him: the English led by Colonel Gorges, and the French by Colonel Mayer. Two other columns advanced from the west, General Cunliffe came down from the north, and three French columns from the Congo and Equatorial Africa. Colonel Gorges was the first to enter Yaunde on January 1st, 1916, and the progress of the other columns was so well timed that they all arrived at Yaunde within a week. This is the more wonderful as it was impossible to communicate with the more distant columns; General Cunliffe, for instance, had marched about 600 miles and stormed the mountains of Mora and Banyo on the way, while one little French force, under Colonel Brisset, had come all the way from Lake Chad. By the middle of February, 1916, the Germans had all surrendered or retired to the Spanish Rio Mundi, and the conquest of the Cameroons was complete.

East Africa. It is impossible to attempt a description of the campaign in East Africa in a small space; so only the barest outline can be given. The "local colour"—jungle, bush, scrub, impenetrable elephant grass, wild beasts, spitting cobras, tze-tze flies, etc., *ad. lib.*—must be left to the reader's imagination. Early in January we had to withdraw from Jassin, our only position in German East Africa, and for the rest of the year the fighting took place almost entirely on British territory. The Germans had at their disposal about 20,000 trained Askaris and 5,000 Europeans, with large numbers of machine-guns and field-guns, under two energetic and determined commanders, Wahle and Von Lettow-Vorbeck. They occupied the bush country between the frontier and the Uganda railway, and made many attempts during the course of the year to cut our communications with Nairobi and Uganda.

General Tighe arrived at the end of April and took over command of the forces in British East Africa. All through the summer there was fighting on the shores of the great lakes, Victoria Nyanza, Tanganyika and Nyassa, and along the borders of Rhodesia. On July 4th the *Koenigsberg*, which was blocked up in the Rufiji River, was shelled by two monitors, directed by aeroplanes, and was smashed up, but her crew and guns were of the greatest use to Von Lettow. General Tighe devoted the latter part of the year to clearing the railway and making preparations for an invasion of German East Africa when reinforcements should arrive from South Africa.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WAR AT SEA.

Command of the Sea. The record of 1915 is chiefly a story of submarines and destroyers, patrol-boats and mine-sweepers. Only once, and that in the first month of the year, did our big ships have a chance of an action with the German battle-cruisers. We had secured the command of the sea in 1914, and very rarely did a German ship dare to show herself on the surface of the waters. But risks had to be run from under-water dangers, and a certain toll of our ships was exacted by submarines and mines. The sun had scarcely risen on the New Year when the battle-ship *Formidable* was struck by two torpedoes from a German submarine in the English Channel. The sea was very rough and only 140 of her 600 men were rescued; half of them were picked up by a Brixham trawler, the *Providence*. But in spite of risks and losses, our Navy was ever on the watch, and not only kept up a blockade of the German ports, but made it possible to send transports and supply ships to all parts of the world. The few German commerce-raiders still at large were soon accounted for. The *Karlsruhe* disappeared and was heard of no more—she was probably wrecked by a hurricane in the West Indies. In March the *Dresden* was caught and destroyed by the *Glasgow* and *Kent* near the Island of Juan Fernandez. In April the armed cruisers *Prince Eitel Friedrich* and *Kronprinz Wilhelm* put into Newport News for repairs and were interned. The *Koenigsberg*, bottled up in an East African river, was destroyed in July by the monitors *Severn* and *Mersey*. The *Bremen*, a cruiser which had been very active off the coast of South America, seems to have got back to a German port, but struck a mine in doing so, and was finally sunk by a British submarine in the Baltic.

Battle of the Dogger Bank. Admiral Beatty's chance came on January 24th. Early that morning he was doing a big sweep in

the North Sea, flying his flag in the *Lion*, and he had with him the battle-cruisers *Tiger*, *Princess Royal*, *New Zealand* and *Indomitable*, with some light cruisers and destroyer flotillas. About 7.30 the *Aurora* reported German ships in sight; they turned out to be Admiral Hipper's battle-cruiser squadron, probably out for a raid. On seeing what they were in for, they turned and fled. Beatty, the *Lion* leading, gave chase and opened fire at 20,000 yards. Our battle-cruisers were doing 28½ knots, the *New Zealand* and *Indomitable* performing wonders to keep pace with the faster ships. The *Lion* scored the first hit, a shell nicely planted on the *Blucher*, about nine o'clock. As we overhauled the enemy, the *Blucher*, which had dropped astern, was greeted with a salvo by each ship as she passed, and was finally left to the attentions of the *New Zealand* and *Indomitable*, with an occasional shot from the *Tiger*. The *Lion*, *Tiger* and *Princess Royal* were engaged with the *Moltke*, *Seydlitz* and *Derfflinger*, and the last two sustained serious damage, in spite of the smoke of a screen of destroyers, which made accurate aim very difficult. At 10.45 the *Blucher* was knocked out of action in a burning condition: an hour later she turned turtle and sank. Our boats, trying to rescue the drowning Germans, were bombed by a Zeppelin and seaplane. But before this happened the *Lion* was badly hit in the bows and dropped out of the action. She was taken in tow by the *Indomitable*, and when Beatty rejoined his squadron in the *Attack* and hoisted his flag in the *Princess Royal*, he found that the battle was over; the German ships, except the *Blucher* and a cruiser, the *Kolberg*, which was sunk, had regained the safety of their mine-fields. However, the *Blucher*, *Derfflinger* and *Seydlitz* had been pretty well punished for the raid they had made on Hartlepool the previous month, and if they were out for another, it did not come off.

Submarine Campaign. As a retaliation for the blockade of Germany, Admiral Von Tirpitz gave out that a submarine "blockade" of Britain would begin on February 18th to prevent ships entering or leaving British ports. As a matter of fact, the submarines got to work long before this date. At the end of January the notorious Von Hersing was busy destroying merchant-ships in the Irish Sea, after warning the crews to take to the boats, while another U boat was at work off Havre, sinking ships without any warning at all. Seven ships were sunk in the first week, and 122 in six months. The Admiralty published no return of U boats destroyed, but for this period it was estimated at between sixty and seventy. Thrilling fights took place between the submarines and tramp steamers, patrol boats and mine-sweepers, and there is no

doubt that some of them were rammed by their intended victims. Two at least were destroyed by bombs dropped from seaplanes. The most famous U boat commander at this time was Otto Weddigen, who had sunk several of our cruisers in 1914. He seems to have been a brave and courteous officer, and no doubt the campaign against harmless merchant ships was repugnant to him. At any rate, he always gave warning and was most considerate and apologetic, and never forgot to send his compliments to "Lord Churchill." His boat, the U29, was sunk on March 25th, and his death created a great sensation in Germany. It was even proposed to change the word "torpedo" to "Weddigen." But very few of the commanders were like him; certainly not Commander Schmidt, who torpedoed the *Falaba*. Over a hundred lives were lost, and the German crew laughed and jeered at the women and children as they were struggling and drowning in the water. They explained afterwards that they were not really laughing, but crying from pity for their victims!

Sinking of the "Lusitania." Indignation in England and America reached a climax when news arrived that the Cunard liner, the *Lusitania*, had been sunk off the Old Head of Kinsale on May 7th. The passengers had just finished lunch when the Second Officer called out "Here's a torpedo!" and a shock and explosion occurred, quickly followed by a second. The huge vessel heeled over, and though she remained afloat for twenty minutes, it was almost impossible to lower the boats as the engines could not be stopped. There were nearly 2,000 persons on board, and 1,125 lost their lives. The German excuse was that they *thought* the *Lusitania* was carrying either troops or munitions. Several American citizens were among the dead, and President Wilson addressed a series of "notes" to the German Government, which led to an undertaking not to torpedo another liner without warning. This understanding was grossly violated on August 19th, when the White Star liner *Arabic* was torpedoed without warning off the south of Ireland, thirty-nine lives being lost, including two Americans. This drew a sharp protest from America. The Germans answered that Commander Schneider *thought* the *Arabic* was going to ram his submarine, but he had been told "not to do it again."

The Mediterranean. The splendid work done by our "surplus fleet" in the Gallipoli campaign, which has been described in a previous chapter, was attended with the gravest risks, as German submarines began to appear in the Mediterranean in April. Most of them were conveyed overland, but some probably got through the Straits of Gibraltar. Otto Von Hersing has the credit of making the long sea journey of 3,000 miles and sinking the *Triumph* and

Majestic, for which the Kaiser gave him the Order of Merit, a decoration even more highly prized than the Iron Cross. We got through the first year of the war without losing a single transport, but on August 14th the *Royal Edward* which had the Lincolnshire Yeomanry on board, was sunk. Several Allied merchantmen were lost, and on November 7th a particularly callous outrage was committed. The *Ancona*, an Italian emigrant ship, crowded with women and children, was shelled and torpedoed without warning. On December 20th the P. and O. Line lost their first boat, the *Persia*, torpedoed off Crete. But the losses were not all on our side, as the Turkish transports and munition ships found to their cost in the Sea of Marmora.

The North Sea. After the Battle of the Dogger Bank the German fleet did not venture far from its own mine-protected shores. Their admirals boasted that they had "searched" the North Sea for our ships without finding them, but it is well known that they hugged the coast of Jutland, and had a squadron of Zeppelins and seaplanes flying in front to give warning of danger ahead. Though our bigger ships were denied the chance of a fight, our destroyers were out in all weathers and our patrol boats and mine-sweepers never ceased performing their trying and dangerous tasks. Hardly a week passed without a little "scrap." In April a "certain liveliness" was reported in the North Sea, and on May 1st there was a sharp action between patrol boats and destroyers near the Galloper Lightship. A German raider called the *Meteor* was at large early in August, doing damage and sowing mines, but on sighting some British cruisers her crew blew her up and made off in the boats. Between August and November Admiral Bacon, with a fleet of monitors and other craft, conducted successful operations off the Belgian coast, and did considerable damage to the U boat lair at Zeebrugge.

The Baltic. There was one sea where the German ships could get a little exercise with a certain amount of safety: namely, the Baltic. But even that was denied them as the summer came and British submarines appeared. Our most noted commanders were Max Horton and Noel Lawrence. The former sank the old battleship *Pomern*, and the latter torpedoed the *Moltke*. Both were decorated by the Tsar with the Cross of St. George. One of our submarines, E13, got stranded on a sandbank off the coast of Denmark. Two German destroyers came up and opened fire, on which the crew took to the water, and half of them were killed before a Danish torpedo-boat pluckily put herself in the way. The Germans seem to have avoided action with the Russian fleet as much as possible in the first half of the year. In August they made a big

attack on the Gulf of Riga, but were driven off by Russian cruisers and destroyers. Their operations on the coast were badly hampered by British submarines. They lost several transports and supply ships and before the end of the year their trade with Sweden was practically held up.

CHAPTER X.

SUMMARY, 1915.

Results of the Year's Fighting. The success hoped for by the Allies had not been achieved in 1915, and the outlook in December was certainly no brighter than it had been in June. The Western Front remained pretty much where it was at the beginning of the year; and though a little ground might be gained or lost here and there, it seemed as unlikely that the Germans would be driven out of France and Belgium as that they would break through to Paris or Calais. The Italians had crossed the Austrian Frontier, but were held up by the Isonzo and the Alps. On the Eastern Front the German arms had carried everything before them, and the Russians were now pinned behind a line two hundred miles east of Warsaw. Serbia had been wiped out and the situation in the Balkans was distinctly unfavourable to the Allies.

Our campaigns against the Turks had not turned out well. After a brilliant advance in Mesopotamia, Townshend was surrounded at Kut-el-Amara, and at one time there were not wanting pessimists who likened our Gallipoli adventure to the Athenian expedition to Sicily, "when Athens' armies fell at Syracuse"; but happily the evacuation falsified their prophecies. In spite of their military successes, however, the position of affairs was far from pleasant for the Germans. Their trade was completely paralysed, and they could only resort to a submarine "blockade" which was utterly "ineffective" and merely a form of "frightfulness." They had lost two more colonies, and they blamed Britain entirely for their failure to win the war. Their anger found vent in the "Hymn of Hate," and the expression, "Gott strafe England," which added a new and convenient verb to the English language.

Leaders of Men. The nature of the warfare on the Western Front gave the commanders of armies little chance of making or increasing their reputations. The splendid defence of Sir John French and Sir Douglas Haig against superior numbers and weight of guns speaks for itself, while Plumer, Gough and Rawlinson carried out difficult tasks with credit. General Joffre proved quite equal to the heavy responsibility thrown on his shoulders, and his able lieutenants, Foch and De Castelnau, adapted their skill in

manoeuvre to the conditions of trench warfare. The Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia, like Sir John French, had conducted a retreat, and can rank as a great general; Alexeieff was considered the cleverest Russian strategist, and Ivanoff, Russky and Brusiloff had shown their ability to control large armies in the field. Of the Germans, Von Falkenhayn, who succeeded Von Moltke as Chief of the General Staff towards the end of 1914, had a great reputation as a strategist, but Von Hindenburg had caught the public eye in Germany by his early victories in East Prussia, and became the idol of the nation. A great wooden image of him was set up in Berlin, and his admirers, on payment of a certain fee, were allowed the privilege of hammering little silver nails into it. His powerful frame and square jaw created the impression of immense strength and firmness of purpose, but he really owed most of his reputation to the brains of Von Ludendorff, his chief of staff, and to the leadership of Von Mackensen.

Zeppelin Raids. A particularly objectionable form of frightfulness, which brought the war home to the people of England, appeared in the shape of "the terror that flyeth by night." The first visit was paid on January 19th, when a German airship crossed the North Sea and dropped bombs in Norfolk, near King's Lynn and Sandringham. On February 20th a Zeppelin appeared over Colchester, and in April raids were made on the Tyne and the Eastern counties, which caused serious loss of life; most of the victims were women and children. In May Southend and Ramsgate were visited; on June 1st bombs were dropped on London for the first time and three days later a raid on the East Coast accounted for twenty-four killed and forty injured. These raids were made on very dark nights, and as yet no effective means had been devised for dealing with the menace. Several Zeppelins had met with accidental ends on the continent, and three or four had been destroyed in their sheds, but so far they had defied us in the air. Great was the joy, then, when it was reported that Lieutenant Warneford had attacked a flying Zeppelin in Belgium and brought it down in flames. The explosion made his machine turn a somersault, but he righted himself and lived to wear the V.C., though only for a few days; he was killed in a flying accident near Paris shortly afterwards. The North-East Coast suffered again on June 15th, and there were two bad raids on London in September and October; the casualties in the latter amounted to 55 killed and 115 injured. No military object was served by these raids and hardly a single soldier was killed. They merely increased the ill-feeling against the Germans and caused a rush to the recruiting offices. The French bombed Karlsruhe and Stuttgart as reprisals for the raids on London and Paris.

Fighting in the Air. The growing importance of aerial scouting and "spotting" for the artillery led to a continual increase in the numbers of our pilots and observers, and improvement in the speed and efficiency of the various types of machines both in the British and French Flying Corps. As fights in the air became of daily occurrence the casualties naturally increased, but we maintained our ascendancy over the German "Taubes" and "Aviatiks," which rarely ventured over our lines. Most of the bombing raids on works of military importance were carried out by the Royal Naval Air Service. On February 12th Commander Samson, with thirty-four airmen, bombed Ostend and Zeebrugge; that well-known pioneer of aviation, Grahame-White, came to grief in the sea, but was rescued by a trawler. The raid was repeated with forty machines on the 16th, and serious damage to the submarine base was observed. Many similar expeditions were undertaken during the course of the year. Towards the end of the year the Germans brought out a very powerful machine called the "Fokker," superior in speed to anything we had got, and for a time it was feared that we had lost our ascendancy. But though our losses were heavy, this was not really the case, as the Fokker was used for defensive purposes and nearly all the fighting still took place behind the German lines.

Many individual deeds of heroism were performed, but it was not the custom in the R.F.C. to publish names, except in special cases where they could not be withheld, such as those of Hawker, Rhodes-Moorhouse, Liddell and Insall, who all won the V.C. The French and Germans were not so reticent; their successful airmen became national heroes and competed with each other for the largest record of victims. Garros and Pégoud continued their amazing careers till the former was captured, and the inventor of "looping" met his death in a great fight in Alsace. The German heroes, Immelmann and Boelke, with the advent of the Fokker, were beginning a rivalry in which Immelmann just kept the lead.

The Coalition Government. Though a party-truce had been agreed upon when war broke out, it had been long felt that all parties ought to be represented in the Government of the country at such a critical time. On May 19th a coalition ministry was formed. Mr. Asquith still remained Prime Minister and Sir Edward Grey Foreign Secretary; but the Unionists, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Austin Chamberlain, came in as First Lord of the Admiralty, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary for India respectively. Perhaps the greatest surprise was the relegation of Mr. Winston Churchill (First Lord of the Admiralty), whose quarrel with Lord Fisher had just led to the latter's resignation, to the Duchy of

Lancaster. The duties of this somewhat harmless post did not offer sufficient scope for his energies, and he soon gave it up and joined his regiment at the front. Lord Kitchener was still Secretary of State for War, and the whole burden of the war fell on his shoulders. This was too much for one man, even a super-man like Kitchener, and a Ministry of Munitions was formed to relieve him of that part of his duties. In October a "General Staff" was appointed, with General Sir Archibald Murray as Chief, which relieved him of further responsibilities, and a little later the five principal members of the Government constituted themselves into a special "War Cabinet."

Munitions. After the Battle of Neuve Chapelle the Special Correspondent of *The Times* called attention to the fact that we ran short of ammunition, and particularly high-explosive shells. This was likewise apparent at the Second Battle of Ypres. An outcry was raised in the Press, and in the controversy which followed, the War Office was blamed for want of foresight in the matter of high-explosives. This indirectly led to the Coalition Government and the creation of a Minister of Munitions. Mr. Lloyd George undertook this onerous post, and there could have been no better man. His energy was marvellous. He toured the country, raising new factories, controlling others, stopping strikes and organising the man-power and machine-power of the Kingdom for the production of munitions. In a remarkable speech, delivered in the House of Commons on December 20th, he was able to give the results of his labours. In May the German output of shells was 250,000 a day, mostly high-explosive. Our works produced 2,500 high explosive and 13,000 shrapnel per day. Mr. Lloyd George had established thirty-three National Shell Factories, and in addition to these, private firms which had never made munitions before, were supplying three times as many high explosive shells in a week as all the arsenals and works had done in the month of May. In the early days the Germans had sixteen machine-guns to a battalion, whereas we only had two. Our production had been increased five-fold since June. The output of grenades had increased by forty times, and more trench-mortars were now made in a fortnight than in the first year of trench warfare.

National Service. There must have been few people who did not wish to do something for their country in these dark days. Two million of the younger men had already joined the army and navy; those over military age found an outlet for their patriotism in the Volunteer Force or performing the duties of Special Constables. The women of Britain were splendid. The time had not quite come for giving their hair for bowstrings, as the Carthaginian women were said to have done, but in addition to those who were

nursing the wounded and serving in canteens, thousands were filling men's places with a freedom, independence and efficiency which would have made their Victorian grandmothers gasp with astonishment. But the man-power and woman-power was not organised for war, and with a view to making the most of everybody, a "National Register" was taken in August of all persons between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five. This was not supposed to be a step towards conscription, but it certainly paved the way.

The Derby Scheme. The National Register showed that over five million men of military age had not "joined up," but a million and a half of these were in "starred occupations," that is, work of national importance. Many married men were hanging back because they thought the single men ought to go first; and the number of recruits each week fell short of the number required by Lord Kitchener. Lord Derby was appointed Director of Recruiting on October 11th, to make a final effort on behalf of the Voluntary System. He produced a scheme divided into forty-six groups, for men between the ages of eighteen and forty-one, groups 1 to 23 being for single men and 24 to 46 for married men, according to age:—thus, a single man of 41 would be in group 23, and a married man of 18 in group 24. A man could enlist at once or "attest" and wait till his group was called up. The system insured that the single men would be called up first, and an "attested" man had the right to appeal to a tribunal and claim temporary or permanent exemption. Over 2½ millions offered themselves, and of the two millions accepted it was estimated that less than half would be available for military service. There were still over a million single men unaccounted for, and the scheme did not save the country from conscription.

The United States. Opinion in America became more and more unfavourable to Germany. The indignation caused by the sinking of the *Lusitania* had hardly been allayed by assurances that it should not happen again, when the *Arabic* and *Hesperian* were torpedoed without warning. Fuel was added to the fire by the discovery of plots and intrigues in America engineered by the Austrian and German Embassies. A journalist named Archibald crossed to Europe and had his baggage searched at Falmouth. Letters were found which clearly proved that Count Bernstorff and Dr. Dumba, the German and Austrian Ambassadors, were spending immense sums of money in bribery and stirring up strikes and conflagrations in the factories in America. Dr. Dumba and two attachés, Boy-Ed and Von Papen, who were deeply implicated, were sent back to Europe; but Bernstorff managed to make his excuses.

The Allies had reason to be grateful to the Americans for their good offices in Germany and Belgium. Mr. Gerard at Berlin and Mr. Whitlock at Brussels were unceasing in their exertions on behalf of those who suffered from the harsh treatment of the Germans. The saddest of all the sad cases was that of Miss Edith Cavell, a lady in charge of a hospital in Belgium, who nursed both Belgian and German wounded. She was arrested and tried for helping some Belgian soldiers to escape over the frontier, and condemned to be shot. In spite of the efforts of the American Legation to secure some mitigation of the penalty, this brutal sentence was carried out on October 12th.

PART III. 1916.

CHAPTER I.

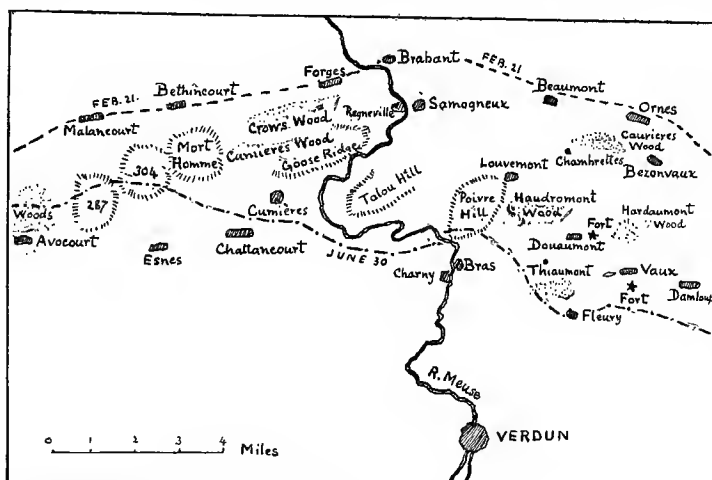
THE BATTLES OF VERDUN.

Verdun. During the first half of 1916 the centre of attraction on the Western Front was the salient of Verdun. The frantic efforts of the Germans to break through and capture the town were only equalled by the determination of the French to hold it. At times it seemed that nothing short of a miracle could save Verdun, but it was saved, not by a miracle, but by the valour and patriotism of the French soldiers and their leaders. Verdun was a fortified town, but it no longer trusted to its forts. It was defended by a line of entrenchments, constructed by General Sarraill in the last months of 1914. These formed a blunt salient nine or ten miles north of the town ; on the east they took a wide sweep through the plain of the Woëvre and came back to the Heights of the Meuse at Les Eparges. It will be remembered that Verdun was in serious danger in the first month of the war, when the Crown Prince closed in from the south-west and the town was almost invested ; but he had to retire at the time of the Battle of the Marne, and his costly efforts to break through the Argonne in 1915 had been unsuccessful. Perhaps it was owing to the Crown Prince's failures that the Kaiser set his mind on Verdun ; its capture, no doubt, would add a little lustre to the heir-apparent's faded laurels. But there were other reasons. The people of Berlin, tired of flag-waving for victories in Russia, were clamouring for some signal success on the Western Front. Calais and Paris were out of the question, but the fortress of Verdun, the corner-stone of the line, was a prize worth a gigantic effort. Verdun once taken, it was argued, the French line would crumple up and the way lie open for a march on Paris.

First Battle of Verdun. Of course the Germans were not simple enough to tell the French that they were going to take Verdun ; by bombardments, demonstrations and feints at other points on the line—Alsace, Champagne, Arras and Ypres—they tried to baffle the Allies as to their real object. By the middle of February they had brought up many new divisions and large numbers of heavy guns north of Verdun. The German plan was to make a frontal attack from the north, on the east or right bank of the Meuse. The French line on this sector ran from Brabant, on the Meuse, to the "Twins of Ornes," about four miles in advance

of the Forts of Douaumont and Vaux. The German preparations could not be entirely concealed from the French, who realised that Verdun was seriously threatened; but they took it calmly—almost too calmly, perhaps. It did not suit their purpose to have a large army bottled up in the salient; and that particular sector was only held by three divisions of French Territorials and some battalions of Colonials and Chasseurs.

The bombardment began on February 16th and reached a furious intensity on the morning of the 21st. Von Falkenhayn, Chief of the Imperial Staff, gave out to the German people that Verdun would be taken in four days; but he reckoned without



Battle of Verdun.

the tenacity of the French "poilus" and the deadliness of the 75's. The German infantry advanced to the attack, confident that they had blown the French to bits and that this was to be the crowning victory of the war. But the French had retired from their obliterated line and received them with a hot fire and fixed bayonets a mile further back. That night they counter-attacked and recovered some of their lost ground. Next morning the German "preparation" was worse than ever. They employed some of those special horrors they had invented, such as liquid fire and "weeping" shells. They won another mile, but at a heavy cost. The French retired a little during the night, and on the 23rd contested every

yard; the German infantry suffered severely from the gun-fire, but their right reached Talou Hill. The French divisions, now sadly thinned in numbers, continued the unequal struggle all through the 24th and held on to Pepper Hill like grim death. That night was very critical; they had now reached a position which it was necessary to hold, a line covering Douaumont and Vaux, two vital points in the defence, but the morning of the 25th found them still holding out in a raging snow-storm. The four days were up and the Germans were still six miles from Verdun.

Fort Douaumont. Supports now began to arrive through the German barrage, and late in the day a great commander, General Pétain, appeared on the scene. He had begun the war as a colonel, and had already given proof, in Artois and Champagne, of the great talent which were to save Verdun and afterwards raise him to the position of Generalissimo of the French Armies. He decided that Douaumont must be held at all costs, and the Germans were equally determined to take it. This task was entrusted to the Kaiser's favourite corps, the Brandenburgers, and the All-Highest himself was watching them through his field-glasses as they advanced on Douaumont. They were repulsed from the village, but one regiment broke through and gained a footing in the Fort. But next morning (the 26th) Pétain brought up the famous 20th Corps of Nancy, and the Brandenburgers in the fort found themselves hemmed in and cut off from all communication with their own army. They held out pluckily for several days, and a remnant made a sortie during a German attack and fought their way out. The French still held Pepper Hill, and the Germans, though fresh divisions were continually hurled against the line, could make no further advance. They claimed that they had taken Douaumont, but this was not correct, as both village and fort became part of "No Man's Land," untenable by either side, but for some time the scene of much fighting. Meanwhile the French had drawn in their curve from the Woevre, and now occupied a much stronger position along the foot of the Heights of the Meuse, which they firmly held against all the assaults of the Bavarians.

Crows' Wood. Finding themselves held up on the right bank of the Meuse, the Germans changed their plans and developed a big attack on the left or western bank. The French defensive system on this side was based on a range of hills called the "Côte d'Oie" (Goose's Ridge). The chief feature, nearest the Meuse, was a wood called "Bois des Corbeaux" (Crows' Wood), while further west was a hill named "Mort Homme" (Dead Man), and another hill marked 304. The attack was heralded by a heavy bombardment which lasted for four days. Then, on March 6th, the

infantry was launched against Crows' Wood and the eastern end of Goose's Ridge. For more than a week fierce fighting went on in the Wood; the Germans were frequently driven out by the French counter-attacks, but came on again in such force that the French retired to the Bois de Cumières on the southern slope of the ridge, leaving the enemy in possession of the shell-battered Bois des Corbeaux. Meanwhile, on the right bank, the Germans had renewed their attacks on the position at Douaumont, but after taking the ruined village they were driven out again, and transferred their attention to Vaux. The Brandenburgers were once more called upon for a mighty effort. Three times they forced their way into Vaux and three times were they driven out with enormous loss. It is estimated that 20,000 of them fell at Douaumont and Vaux.

Dead Man Hill. Just as the Douaumont position was the key to Verdun on the right bank of the Mause, so was the hill marked Mort Homme on the left bank. The Germans had tried to get at Mort Homme from the positions they had won in Crows' Wood, but had only succeeded in capturing an outlying spur at a very heavy cost. They now tried from the western side, and made a series of attacks between Avocourt Woods and Malancourt, on Hill 304. The French held out at Malancourt till the end of March, when Pétain secretly withdrew his line to the lower slopes of Hill 304, with such success that the Germans actually shelled and assaulted the trenches he had vacated. Failing to get at Mort Homme by way of Hill 304, the Germans now decided on a grand combined attack from east, north and west, with 100,000 men. But the masses of infantry were mown down by the withering fire from the French 75's as they issued from the woods, and in the few places where they got to close quarters they were repulsed by the bayonet. This last grand attack was kept up for two days (April 9th and 10th), and with its failure the attempt to take Mort Homme was abandoned.

On the other side of the river the French still held the high ground at Douaumont and Vaux; the Germans were exhausted, their offensive was played out, and though fighting still broke out at intervals, the first battle of Verdun had come to an end. It was a great triumph for the French. They had held their own for seven weeks against half a million Germans and had saved Verdun. The enemy casualties were reckoned at 200,000, while the French loss was less than half that number.

Second Battle of Verdun. On April 10th the French, on the west of the Meuse, were holding a line which covered Hill 304, Mort Homme and Cumières Wood, but they were preparing strong positions on the southern slopes of the hills to which they could

retire in case of need. At the end of the month General Pétain was promoted to the command of the Central Army Group, and he was succeeded by General Nivelle, who had conducted the defence between Douaumont and Vaux. Like Pétain, he had begun the war as a colonel, and was destined to become commander-in-chief of the French Armies. The Germans had committed themselves far too deeply to give up Verdun without another effort; and early in May the battle broke out again in all its fury. The first attack was on "Dead Man"; it was no longer a position of such vital importance to the French defence, but the Germans were determined to have it. After a bombardment calculated to blow the French over the hills, frontal attacks were made, and when these failed, flank attacks were tried, but the French held the summits for nearly three weeks. On May 21st the French retired to their positions on the southern slopes, and the Germans occupied Hill 304 and Mort Homme, which had cost them so many thousands of men, but hardly gave them the advantage they expected. The last week of May saw some of the most desperate fighting of the battle. The Germans took the village of Cumières and pushed on towards Chattancourt, but they were hurled back on Cumières, and finding all further efforts to break the French line in vain, they resorted to a final terrific bombardment and turned their attention once more to the east bank of the Meuse.

Fort Vaux. The French line ran south of Pepper Hill and through the village of Vaux; the ruined village and fort of Douaumont had been abandoned, but Fort Vaux was still within the French lines. While the Crown Prince was sacrificing his divisions on the slopes of Mort Homme, General Nivelle was planning an attack on Fort Douaumont. It was entrusted to General Mangin's division. The Fort was rushed and after a day's hard fighting in the fort itself the enemy were driven out; but the next day it was recaptured by two divisions of Bavarians. In the last week of May the Germans gained ground at Haudromont and towards Thiaumont, but their left was held up by Fort Vaux. Following a furious bombardment, their infantry pushed in a big wedge between Douaumont and Vaux, and on June 1st the fort was assaulted from three sides; next day it was completely cut off. A curious state of affairs prevailed; the Germans were on the top of the fort and in the fosse surrounding it, while a French garrison had possession of the inside. This gallant band, suffering agonies from fumes and thirst, held out in the crumbling cellars of the fort for five days. When at last they surrendered, Commandant Raynal, the commander, was allowed to retain his sword in recognition of his heroic defence.

Fort Vaux captured, the Germans thought Verdun was theirs and pressed on with redoubled vigour. Thiaumont was taken, and they got as far as Fleury, within four miles of Verdun, but no farther. The French retook the fort at Thiaumont, and at the end of June the Germans found themselves as completely baffled on this side as they had been on the Western ridge at the end of May. And so, after two months' bitter fighting, the second great assault on Verdun ended in failure. The Germans now pretended that they did not care whether they took Verdun or not, but the veteran Von Haeseler, the Crown Prince's adviser, and Von Falkenhayn, Chief of the Imperial Staff, lost their jobs. On the first day of July the attention of the German High Command was attracted to another battle-ground, where the great allied offensive on the Somme strained their resources to the utmost.

Third Battle of Verdun. During August and September General Nivelle was rehearsing a scheme for the winning back of Douaumont and Vaux. Three picked divisions were withdrawn from the line and carefully trained on a model of the ground, so that when the time came each man should know exactly what to do and how to do it. The three divisions, under General Mangin, went over the top at twelve o'clock on October 24th. The division of Colonials on the left drove the enemy back for over a mile, rushed through the village of Douaumont and swept the Germans out of the fort. The division Pasaga, in the centre, broke through all the intricate defences which the enemy had constructed in the past few months, and established itself on a line from Fort Douaumont to Vaux Pond. The right division (De Lardemelle) recaptured the battery of Damloup, which had been lost on July 10th and penetrated into the Vaux Woods. The German resistance was very obstinate and it took several days to enclose the fort of Vaux on three sides. The fort was heavily shelled and when the time seemed ripe, on the night of November 2nd, a battalion rushed forward to the assault. But the fort was empty; the German garrison, remembering the fate of Raynal's little force, had fled while there was still time. They could not have been afraid of suffering from hunger and thirst, as the stores they left behind included 1,000 bottles of soda-water and 3,000 pots of jam!

Nivelle did not tempt fortune by pressing the advantage he had gained too far. The next advance was fixed for December 1st, but was delayed by bad weather till the 15th. That was a great day for the French. Muteau's division swept through Vacherauville and swarmed over the crest of Pepper Hill; the village of Louvemont, after a stubborn defence, was stormed by the Colonials; nothing could withstand the Chasseurs and Zouaves, who carried

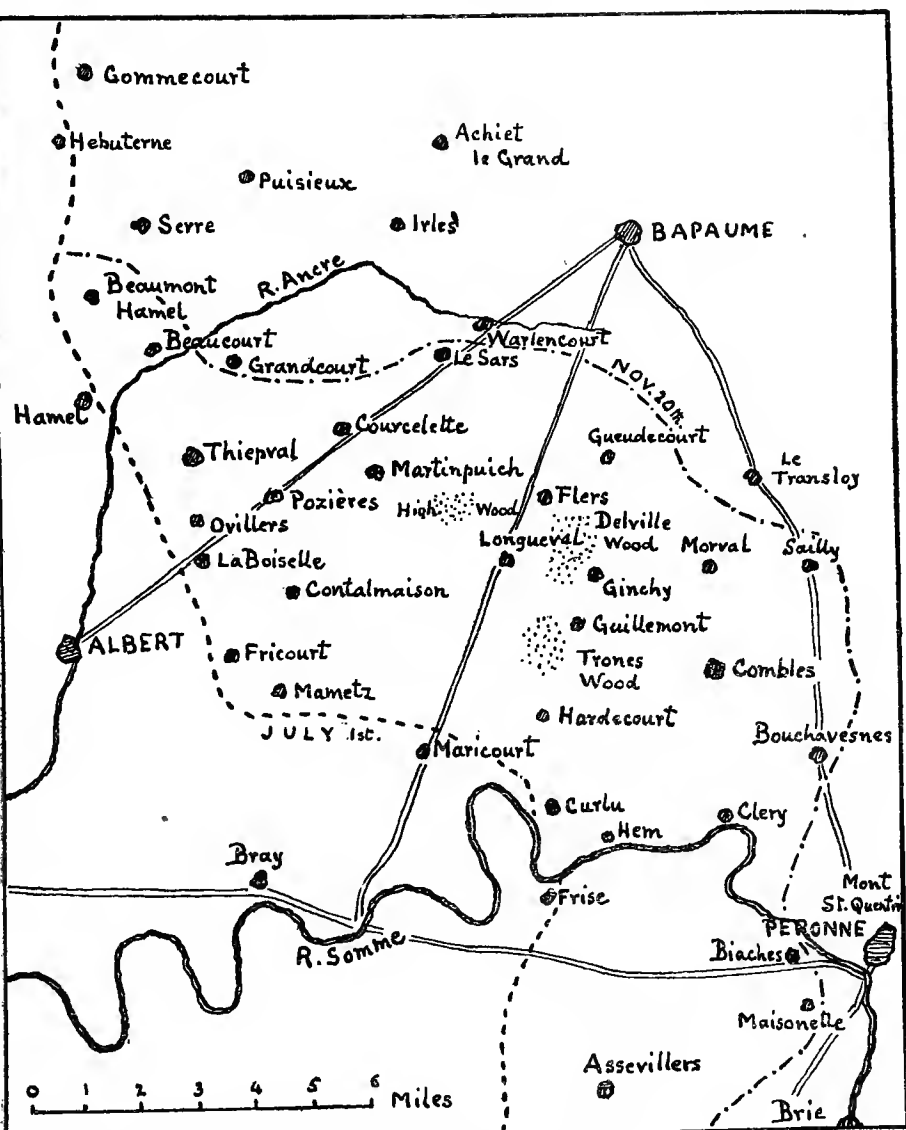
trench after trench and got as far as the Caurières Wood. From Vaux to Bézonvaux the Germans were driven back two miles. It was a great battle and the French had "got their own back" with a vengeance. Nearly 12,000 prisoners were taken and by December 18th the French had firmly established their new line against all counter-attacks.

CHAPTER II.

THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME.

The British Line. General Joffre did not ask Sir Douglas Haig for help at Verdun, nor did the latter offer any, but he was able to help indirectly by relieving the French Army at Arras, so that the British held a continuous line from Ypres to a point just north of the river Somme. No great battle took place on the British front during the first half of the year, but artillery bombardments, mining, and raiding and bombing went on incessantly, varied now and again by a local action. In the middle of February the Germans attacked at Ypres, and captured an embankment known as the Bluff. This could not be recovered at the time, but on March 2nd a surprise was sprung on the enemy, and not only was the Bluff recaptured, but some of their first-line trenches were also seized. A month later we exploded six big mines at St. Eloi, and the fighting for the possession of the craters lasted for weeks. At the end of April the enemy indulged in gas attacks, followed by rushes of infantry; on one occasion the gas was blown back over their line, to the utter discomfiture of the infantry preparing to charge. In May there was still fighting on the Vimy Ridge, and in June the enemy almost broke through at Hooze, but were checked and rolled back by the Canadians. New divisions were constantly arriving from home, including the Anzacs and others released from Gallipoli; guns and munitions kept pouring in, for while the Germans were exhausting themselves in their fruitless attacks at Verdun, Sir Douglas Haig was quietly preparing for an offensive on a scale not yet attempted on the Western Front.

Plans and Preparations. The ground chosen was a stretch of some fifteen miles north and south of the Somme, opposite the towns of Bapaume and Peronne. No fighting worth mentioning had taken place in this area since the battle of Albert in the second month of the war. The Germans had left nothing undone to render their positions impregnable, and had come to look upon them as permanent. Their system of trenches, redoubts and underground galleries was wonderfully strong and elaborate, and the villages, woods and quarries behind the line were fortified with marvellous



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Battle of the Somme.

cunning and industry. Their first line was sited along the lower slope of the ridges which form the watershed between the Somme valley and the rivers flowing north to Belgium. Near the top of the slopes was a second line, equally strong, and still farther back a third line, the whole connected by a perfect maze of communications and switches. The Allied commanders proposed to oust the enemy from these positions between the river Ancre and a point several miles south of the Somme. Everything had been agreed upon except the date. Sir Douglas Haig wished to postpone it as long as possible, as his power in men and munitions was constantly increasing, but in June it seemed that the time had come to relieve the pressure at Verdun, and the great attack was fixed for the first day of July. For four months the country behind the British lines had been one huge workshop; as an instance of the thoroughness of the preparations it may be mentioned that 120 miles of water-pipes had been laid down. The artillery bombardment began on June 24th, and next day our airmen flew over the lines and destroyed the enemy observation balloons (or "sausages"). The main attack, from Serre to Maricourt, was entrusted to Rawlinson's Fourth Army of five corps. A subsidiary attack was to be made on Gommecourt by part of Allenby's Army. South of Maricourt General Foch's two French armies were to attack at the same time.

Five Days' Fighting. On July 1st, at 7.30 a.m., our infantry leaped from the trenches and dashed for the German line, which had been pretty well smashed up by a final terrific bombardment. In the region of the Ancre some big mines were exploded, and under cover of smoke and gas our men rushed the German trenches, broke through to Serre and Thiepval, and some even penetrated as far as Grandcourt. But the fortified villages, armed with carefully concealed machine-guns, could not be taken; supports and ammunition were brought up with the greatest difficulty through the deadly German barrage, and our advanced units were nearly all cut off or destroyed. Our losses in this district were the heaviest and our gains the least. Further south we dashed up the "Sausage Valley," and outflanked the villages of Orvillers and Boiselle. The advance of our right was more marked; Fricourt was surrounded, Montauban was carried before noon, and Mametz fell before evening. Sir D. Haig now decided to press his main attack where we had met with most success, namely between La Boiselle and Maricourt. This was entrusted to three corps under Rawlinson, while the other two corps under Gough were to maintain a steady pressure from La Boiselle to Serre. On the 2nd Fricourt was captured. Bernafay and Caterpillar Woods were cleared, and

the enemy driven out of La Boisselle ; on the 5th we reached Contalmaison. We had broken through for over a mile on a six mile front, captured four fortified villages, and nearly 6,000 prisoners. General Foch's armies, on a front of ten miles, had been even more successful. Their attack was a surprise for the Germans, who thought the French were too busy at Verdun to try on an offensive, and after five days' fighting they were half-way to Peronne.

The Second Line. We now pressed up the slopes to the enemy second line. On July 10th Mametz Wood and Contalmaison, stubbornly defended by the division of the Prussian Guard known as the "Cockchafers," were won after three days' hard fighting, and Trones Wood was entered, where the struggle was very desperate, but by the 13th we were in possession of the southern half. Sir Douglas Haig now ordered an attack on the second line along the whole front. At dawn on the 14th the assault was delivered, and before eight o'clock Trones Wood was completely cleared of the enemy, and a little party of 170 men, who had been cut off and surrounded by the enemy, were rescued. The two Bazentinis were taken that day, and the greater part of Longueval. Towards evening the advance was pushed on to High Wood by infantry with cavalry on the flanks. Arrow Head Copse, and Waterlot Farm were captured next day, and the South African Brigade entered Delville Wood, where they held out for five days against a Brandenburg division, but our troops were shelled out of High Wood. At last, on the 17th, Orvillers, which had been holding up our advance on the left, surrendered to Gough after a gallant defence of fifteen days. We had now carried the enemy's second position on a front of three miles, including four fortified villages and three woods. South of the Somme the French, by the capture of Biache, were within a mile of Peronne ; north of the Somme they had fought their way up the slopes and their line ran from Hem to Maltzborn Farm, where they linked up with the British right.

The Struggle on the Ridge. The Germans were busy strengthening their positions on the reverse slopes of the ridges, but showed no disposition to retire to them. They brought up large reinforcements, and made furious efforts to regain some of the ground they had lost. In spite of the gallant fight of the South Africans we lost our hold on Delville Wood, and the Brandenburgers recaptured most of Longueval ; it was not till the end of the month that they were finally driven out.

Meanwhile Gough moved forward on our northern flank and captured Pozières (July 25th). The fight for the ridges went on all through August ; we met with very stubborn resistance and progress was slow. The village of Guillemont baffled us all through

the month ; several times our troops carried it with a rush, but as we could not work round it on the flanks it had to be abandoned each time. Gough pushed on north of Pozières, but was held up by Mouquet Farm, south of Thiepval, where the German defences were unusually strong, and held regardless of loss. The first week of September, however, saw a great combined attack from the Ancre to the Somme, which gave us the summit of the ridges. Guillemont was stormed and held this time, and some of our men got into Ginchy, but after three days' fighting amongst the ruins of the village the greater part remained in the hands of the enemy. Another attack on the 9th met with immediate success, and the Germans were driven out. The French meanwhile, after two failures, succeeded in seizing Falfemont Farm, and were advancing through Leuze Wood on Combles. By the middle of September we had command of the ridges, and could look down on the valleys below.

The Coming of the Tanks. September 15th is a day to be remembered—it is the birthday of the Tanks. Early that morning strange armoured monsters were to be seen wobbling along the little street of Flers, dealing out death and destruction from their sides. They were followed by groups of infantry, convulsed with laughter at the antics of the weird creatures in front of them. The Germans, however, did not share their amusement ; they were struck with consternation and dismay as they saw the Tanks calmly crawling over their trenches and crushing down trees, masonry and other obstacles they met with as if of no account. We did a splendid day's work. Led by the Tanks, our infantry cleared High Wood of the enemy, Courcellette was captured by the Canadians and a Tank which butted into the sugar-refinery, and Martinpuich was taken by a Scottish brigade. By the end of the day we had broken through two lines of defence and taken 4,000 prisoners.

Our next objective was Combles, a little town lying in a hollow valley between two slopes. It was agreed between Sir Douglas Haig and General Foch that Combles should be taken by investment, the British working round from the north and the French from the south. The German garrison saw the trap just in time, and made their escape. Combles was occupied by the Allies the next day (September 26th). It was found to be very strongly fortified, and might have held out for weeks against assault. Gueudecourt was taken the same day in a very novel manner : a certain trench which had given us a lot of trouble was cleared by a tank and an aeroplane, and we entered the village at a cost of five casualties.

Thiepval and the Wonder Work. It was now time to push

northwards towards Thiepval. The defences to be surmounted are described by Sir Douglas Haig "as nearly impregnable as art, nature and the labour of two years could make them." Gough had been held up for a long time at Mouquet Farm and by a remarkable example of German ingenuity called "The Wonder Work," which quite justified its name. However, Gough had overcome the Wonder Work on September 15th, and the same day that Combles fell, by a surprise attack he carried Mouquet Farm and the Zollern Redoubt, a mile east of Thiepval. Next day we had Thiepval and stormed the Stuff and Schwaben Redoubts and the trenches connecting them, which gave us possession of the ridges N.E. of Thiepval, overlooking the vale of the Ancre. Over 2,300 prisoners were taken on these two days. But the work of clearing out the enemy from their cellars and underground galleries took many days' hard fighting, and it was not till nearly a month later that this task was accomplished.

The Downward Slopes. Before the end of the month we had carried the enemy's fourth line between Courcellette and Gueudecourt, and the Germans fell back on a new position they had prepared covering Eaucourt l'Abbaye and Le Sars. These two villages were captured by October 7th, and we pushed on down the slopes towards Bapaume. The Germans were holding their last line of defence, and it was hoped that, given favourable weather, one more big attack all along the line would drive them into the open. But the weather was all against us, and the condition of the ground over which we had fought made it impossible to bring up sufficient supplies of munitions. The French managed to take Sailly-Saillisel, while we made several small gains on the line, especially north of Thiepval, but the advance, on the whole, had come to an end, and we were content to consolidate our positions in the mud of the downward slopes.

Battle of the Ancre. The second week in November the weather improved, and a big attack was planned north and south of the Ancre on the positions which resisted our efforts on July 1st. Since that date no big offensive had been launched on this line, and the Germans had made use of the time to strengthen their already strong defences, but we had the advantage now of being able to support an attack with flank fire from the Thiepval ridge. After four days "preparation," our troops advanced under a dense fog against the enemy positions from the Schwaben Redoubt to Serre. South of the river our advance was rapid and complete; the defences between Thiepval and the Ancre fell at once; the Germans rushed to their dug-outs and surrendered by hundreds; at one time the number of prisoners was greater than the attacking force.

North of the river we met with greater resistance ; the attack on Serre had to be given up, but a Highland division broke down all opposition and forced its way through Beaumont Hamel and half a mile beyond. Further to the right the Royal Naval Division, advancing behind a creeping barrage in the direction of Beaucourt, found the way blocked by a formidable redoubt and intact barbed wire. Many of them fought their way through, but the losses were severe, and the advance, as a whole, was delayed until two tanks were brought up against the redoubt, on which the garrison hoisted the white flag. Meanwhile the right battalion, under Colonel Freyberg, had pushed along the bank of the river for two miles, and actually reached Beaucourt, when it had to wait for 24 hours till our own barrage lifted. Then, next day, Freyberg, though severely wounded, put himself at the head of his men, and carried the village by assault, for which he received the V.C. In two days fighting we made our positions secure for two miles on both banks of the Ancre, captured over 5,000 prisoners, and had broken defences which for over four months the enemy had considered impregnable.

Results. At the end of the battle of the Somme we were three miles from Bapaume, and the French were a mile from Peronne, but these two towns were not the objectives of the "push" as defined by Sir Douglas Haig. We had put an end to the attack on Verdun, and struck a blow at the Germans which must have rudely shaken their confidence in the invincibility of their armies. We had driven the enemy from his commanding positions on the high ground to the foot of the slopes, where he could not hold out for long, as events soon proved. The German losses on the Somme were enormous ; over half a million men had been brought from other parts of France and from the Eastern front, and many of the divisions had lost half their strength. We took 38,000 prisoners, 125 guns, and 514 machine-guns. The French had 70,000 prisoners, 203 guns, 215 trench mortars and 988 machine-guns. The Allies' loss was heavy, but there was something to show for it, and the lives had not been given in vain.

CHAPTER III.

RUSSIA AND ROUMANIA.

Lake Narotch. During the winter months the Russians were busy strengthening their armies and accumulating munitions for a Spring offensive. Their Northern Army was now commanded by General Kuropatkin, the veteran of the Japanese war. Everts commanded in the centre and Ivanoff in the south. Opposite the armies of Kuropatkin and Everts the Germans were

under the immediate control of Hindenburg, while opposed to Ivanoff there were mainly Austrian armies under the Archduke Frederick. The first move of importance was made by Everts in the direction of Vilna. He made a series of attacks between Lake Narotch and the Marshes south of it, and drove the Germans back some distance. A lot of his big guns were then sent to other parts of the front; and on the Germans attacking in force with great weight of artillery towards the end of April, the Russians had to retire and lost more ground than they had gained.

Volhynia and the Bukovina. On June 4th Brusiloff, who had succeeded Ivanoff in the Southern Command, began a big move in the region called Volhynia, between Chartorysk and Brody. The Russians advanced over twenty miles in two days and drove the Austrians from Lutsk. They then pushed out north and south, captured Dubno and held the line of the Styr from Sokul to the Galician frontier. By the 16th, they were twenty miles west of Lutsk; they had crossed the Stockhod river and were threatening Kovel. The nature of the Austrian rout may be gathered from the fact that they lost 70,000 prisoners in these twelve days. Hindenburg was alarmed; he sent large reinforcements, and put Von Linsingen in charge of the defence. By vigorous counter-attacks the Russians were driven from their positions on the Stockhod. Further south the Russians had achieved an astonishing success. Pressing forward between the Dniester and the Pruth, General Leschitsky drove the Austrians from one position to another, and by June 16th had taken Czernowitz, the capital of the Bukovina. The Austrians continued their retreat and in another week the Russians had got right through to Kimpolung, and were once more masters of the Province. They had also advanced against the Sereth and captured Buczacz. In three weeks they had reconquered two provinces and taken 200,000 prisoners.

Straightening the Line. The Russian successes in June had naturally pushed out two big salients, and the problem for Brusiloff in July was to straighten his line. North of Volhynia this task was entrusted to General Lesch's army, which formed the left wing of Everts' command. After forcing the crossings of the Styr from Kolki northwards he reached the Stockhod at a place called Ugly, and in less than a month was holding the line of the river as far as the Pripet Marshes. South of the Volhynian salient General Sakharoff pushed out towards the source of the Styr, making great hauls of guns and prisoners as he advanced. The Austrians put up a great struggle in defence of Brody, but after two days' hard fighting they had to retire, and Sakharoff entered the town. He still pushed on, driving in the Austro-German

flank till he got into touch with the Russian Army between the Sereth and the Strypa. Meanwhile Leschitsky had advanced westwards from Kolomea and taken Delatyn. Here he was held up by floods, but as soon as they subsided he turned northwards and on August 10th entered Stanislau, which the enemy had evacuated at his approach. The army on the Strypa also made a big move forwards and got within ten miles of Halicz. The result of these operations was an advance in the region of the Dniester of about forty miles, and the capture of prisoners and material was colossal.

Roumania Joins the Allies. The Russian victories, especially the advance in the Bukovina, exercised great influence on the hesitation of Roumania. The position of Roumania had been difficult from the very first. When war broke out, old King Charles, or Carol, as he was called, was on the throne. He was a Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen (the Catholic branch of the family). As a young man he had served in the Prussian Guards, he had built up a Roumanian army on the Prussian model, and was naturally pro-German in his sympathies. But the Roumanian people were not pro-German. They owed their independence to Russia, and grudged Austria the possession of Transylvania, where most of the inhabitants were Roumanians. King Carol died in October, 1914, and was succeeded by his nephew, Ferdinand, who had married the Duke of Edinburgh's daughter, and had no leanings towards Germany or Austria. It now became a question of neutrality or joining the Allies. The champion of the Allies' cause was a statesman named Take Ionescu, whose efforts in favour of intervention might have been successful in 1915 if the situation in Russia had been more favourable. But now Russia was prospering once more, and had got into touch with Roumania by way of the Bukovina, while the Allies had a large force at Salonika to hold the Bulgarians in play. The time seemed ripe, and on August 27th, war was declared on Austria. Germany and Bulgaria immediately declared war on Roumania. The addition of Roumania to the numbers of their enemies was not displeasing to the Germans, who welcomed the prospect of over-running another little kingdom; a kingdom rich in corn and petrol, two commodities which they greatly needed. Unfortunately their expectations were realised. The Russian advance on the Dniester came to an untimely end. Bothmer, the German general who was defending Halicz, was reinforced by divisions and guns from the Western Front, while Brusiloff had no reserves, and his supply of munitions began to fall off. In the Bukovina Leschitsky could barely hold his own, and Roumania had to fight her own battle without the effective support she had hoped for from Russia and Salonika.

Transylvania. The Roumanians made the mistake of massing the greater part of their forces on the Carpathian frontier for an invasion of Transylvania. As they poured through the passes, the Austrians fell back before them, and the first fortnight of September saw a triumphal advance into the enemy's country. But in the background Von Falkenhayn, late Chief of the Imperial Staff, was collecting a large Austro-German army, remarkably strong in artillery. He suddenly appeared in great force and fell upon a Roumanian corps at Hermanstadt. By the end of the month the tide of invasion was checked, and the Roumanians began to retreat towards the passes with Von Falkenhayn at their heels. When they reached the mountains the Roumanians turned on their pursuers and fought desperately in defence of their country. All through October the fight for the passes went on. The enemy only succeeded in breaking through at one point, the Vulkan Pass, and here they were brilliantly driven back by General Dragalina a few days later.

Von Mackensen in the Dobrudja. While Von Falkenhayn was pressing on the northern frontier, Von Mackensen was making a thrust south of the Danube. With a motley army of Germans, Bulgarians and Turks he pushed into the Dobrudja, the Roumanian province between the Danube and the Black Sea. It was only held by two weak divisions, of which one was overwhelmed at Turtukau and the other effected its retirement from Silistria. An army of Roumanians, Russians and Serbs then took up a line to defend the railway which runs from Constanza to Bucharest across the famous Tchernavada Bridge. Von Mackensen's first attack on this line failed from lack of munitions and he had to fall back, but he tried again a month later and met with greater success. Constanza, the Roumanian port on the Black Sea, had to be abandoned (October 22nd), but its huge stores of oil and corn were previously destroyed, and Von Mackensen was annoyed and disappointed to find little booty worth having. As the Roumanians retired they blew up the great bridge across the Danube, one of the finest in the world, the railway being carried on arches for ten miles across the marshes towards Bucharest. Sakharoff now arrived in the Dobrudja with a Russian army, and for the time being put a stop to Von Mackensen's advance.

Invasion of Roumania. Early in November, Von Falkenhayn forced the passes and marched rapidly across the Roumanian plains. On the 21st his advance-guard had reached Crajova and the Roumanians were retiring eastwards. Von Mackensen now crossed the Danube at various points between Sistova and Corabia, and threatened the flank of the Roumanian armies. The retire-

ment had to be continued. By the end of the month the western half of Wallachia was in the hands of the enemy and the situation was becoming hopeless. It was decided not to attempt to defend Bucharest, a city fortified by Brialmont on the lines of Liège and Namur. It was abandoned on December 1st and four days later the enemy was in possession of the capital of Roumania. North of Bucharest lies Ploesti, the centre of the oil district. Von Falkenhayn pushed on to Ploesti, eagerly anticipating his reward, and great was his annoyance to find that the oil wells had been destroyed by the English and American engineers in charge, and could not be worked again for months. The Roumanian Government retired to Jassy, and the army, with the help of some Russian reinforcements under General Gourko, took up a line to defend Moldavia. Meanwhile Von Mackensen had cleared the Dobrudja, driven Sakharoff across the Danube into Bessarabia and was threatening Braila and Galatz. Before the end of the year the whole of Wallachia was in the hands of the enemy.

CHAPTER IV.

ITALY AND THE BALKANS.

Austrian Success in the Trentino. The geography of Italy's northern front is so complicated and difficult that only an expert could follow or describe the operations in this area. A map does not help us much; one has to imagine lofty snow-covered mountains and ridges, great overhanging crags and precipices, yawning chasms and deep ravines, gorges and glaciers. Yet here were found barbed-wire defences and heavy guns mounted in seemingly impossible positions; and there was fighting going on all through the storms of winter. The Austrian forces in the Trentino were commanded by the Archduke Karl, heir to the Imperial Crown. It was known that General Cadorna was planning a big offensive on the Isonzo for the early summer, and the Austrians determined to stop it by making a sweeping descent from the mountains on the northern frontier and cutting Cadorna's communications on the plains of Lombardy and Venetia. Thousands of their best troops and many batteries of their heaviest guns were sent to the Trentino. The Italians were quite unprepared for the bombardment which broke out on May 14th, and had to abandon their forward positions. The Austrians, following up their success under cover of their heavy howitzer-fire, drove the Italians to the last ridges of the mountains. The situation at the end of May was very critical; any further retirement meant that the Italian plains would be at the mercy of the enemy. The Italians hung on desperately at

Posina and Asiago, while Cadorna was assembling a new army of nearly half a million men. The Pass of Buole was the scene of one of the deadliest struggles, but the Italians held firm and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy.

The Austrians Driven Back. At last, on June 3rd, the new armies began to reinforce their hard-pressed comrades in the defiles, and Italy, though invaded, was saved. For another fortnight the Austrians made repeated attempts to break through, but without avail. Their attack was now worn out, many divisions and batteries had to be removed to check the rout in Galicia, and after a final bombardment of the passes, they gave it up. It was now Cadorna's turn. He opened his counter-offensive on June 16th, and the Austrians were driven from crag to gorge and from gorge to crag. By the end of the month the retreat had covered ten miles and the Austrians were almost back in their original positions. About three-quarters of the ground lost during May had been regained.

Capture of Gorizia. Cadorna was now at liberty to pursue his schemes on the Isonzo front. Here again, a map does not help us to realise the difficulties of the attack. We must picture a rapid river flowing between steep slopes of rugged mountains and in a hollow between the mountains, the town of Gorizia. To take Gorizia it was necessary first to secure the heights commanding it; Monte Sabatino on the north, Podgora in front and Monte St. Michele on the south. The Italians had seized positions on these heights during the previous summer, but had been unable to hold them, and now had to re-assault them. July was devoted to preparations, which included tunnelling and undermining the Austrian positions on the west bank. On August 1st the bombardment began all along the Isonzo line, the "Infernal Front" as the Austrians called it. An attack on the Carso was made on the 4th which drew off many Austrian troops from Gorizia; just what it was intended to do. The real assault was made on the 6th. The Austrians put up a brave resistance, especially at Podgora; but by the 8th the heights had been won and the enemy was already evacuating the town. That night the Italians crossed the river and Gorizia was occupied the next day. The retreating Austrians were pursued by Italian cavalry and the operations yielded nearly 20,000 prisoners.

The Balkans. The Allied front in the Balkan Peninsula was limited to the entrenched camp which had been formed at Salonika by General Sarrail. Our objects there were at present rather undefined, but in view of future developments it seemed a wise plan to have a footing in that turbulent theatre of the war. It

prevented our enemies from occupying that most desirable seaport, and perhaps forcing Greece to join them. Salonika would also be a useful base for the reconquest of Serbia and the invasion of Bulgaria, when the time came. The scattered remnants of the Serbian army were collected at Corfu and afterwards transferred to Salonika. They formed the left wing of the Allies, ready for a march on Monastir. The French were in the centre and the British on the right. No move was made by either side until May 21st, when the Bulgarians crossed the frontier of Macedonia and seized some Greek forts.

Awkward Position of Greece. The seizure of these forts by Bulgaria was very different from the occupation of Salonika by the Allies. England, France and Russia were the protecting Powers of Greece, and by a clause in the treaty of 1830 they had the right to occupy Greek territory if they were agreed about it. Bulgaria had no such right, and the seizure of the Greek forts was a violation of Greek neutrality. The Greeks, however, either could not or would not resist. King Constantine had a Prussian wife and was very pro-German. The people, on the whole, were pro-Ally; but recent events in the Balkans had given them the impression that Germany was the winning side, and they had no wish to see their country overrun like Serbia and Montenegro. Venizelos, who had a large following, was anxious to join the Allies at once, but he was no longer in power. The Protecting Powers did not try to force Greece to join them, but they did try to prevent Constantine from assisting his brother-in-law, the Kaiser. It was demanded that the Greek army should be demobilised, and this was partially carried out. But riots were got up in Athens by the "Reservists" and the Allied Embassies were attacked. This forced the Allied Fleet to try on a kind of friendly blockade of Greece. The imports of coal and food were held up, which had the desired effect, and the situation, though far from satisfactory, became less acute.

Bulgarian Offensive. About the middle of August the Bulgarians attacked along the whole line. In the centre (Lake Doiran) the British and French held firm, but the Bulgarians were able to push their wings well into Greek territory. On the west they seized Florina, a Greek town south of Monastir, and on the east General Theodorov advanced along the Struma and swooped down on the port of Kavalla. This town was supposed to be defended by a Greek Corps. Two divisions surrendered without a blow, and were received with open arms as friends of the Kaiser. The third division thought otherwise, and joined the Allies at Salonika.

Allied Offensive. The Bulgarians were not allowed to have

matters all their own way. General Milne moved against them in September and pushed them back from the Struma line. During October they were driven beyond the railway between Seres and Demirhissar, and the line we had won was held till severe weather put an end to further operations. But the main Allied Offensive took place on the left wing in the direction of Monastir. An army of French, Russians and Serbs drove the enemy from Lake Ostrovo and Florina, crossed the frontier and came up against the Kenali lines. After a month's hard fighting these lines were turned and the enemy retired behind the Bistritza. But there was no withstanding the Serbians, once more fighting on their own territory, and on November 19th the ancient city of Monastir was recaptured from the Bulgarians.

Confusion at Athens. The course of events, and particularly the occupation of Greek territory by the Bulgarians did not improve the situation at Athens. There were two conflicting parties in the Greek Army; the "loyalists" as they were called, devoted to their pro-German and shifty King, and the Venizelists or "patriots" burning to fight the Bulgarians in defence of their country. The former flocked to Constantine at Athens, while the latter joined Venizelos at Salonika, and openly embraced the cause of the Allies. Greece was now almost in a state of anarchy, and it was quite evident that Constantine, surrounded as he was by German influences, could not be trusted to carry out his promises. On December 1st a small body of French, British and Italian Marines was landed at the Piraeus, the port of Athens, and marched towards the capital. They were met and attacked by "loyalist" troops and driven back to the Piraeus with some loss of life. The guns of the Allied warships and a strict blockade of the coast brought Constantine to his senses, but it was not till a month afterwards that, after much shifting and shuffling, he consented to the Allies' demands. The greater part of the "loyalist" army was transferred to the Peloponnesus (the southern peninsula of Greece), the King apologised for the violent behaviour of his mob, and the flags of the Allies were publicly saluted by representative units of the Greek army and navy.

CHAPTER V.

ASIA AND AFRICA.

Siege of Kut-el-Amara. On the 1st January General Townshend and his force had been besieged at Kut for 26 days. They were full of spirits and confident of being able to hold out till relief came, which they quite expected before the end of the month.

The little Arab town lies in a loop of the Tigris, and the neck of the loop was defended by several lines of trenches and a fort; after the failures of the Turkish attack on the fort on Christmas Eve there was not much fear of the place being taken by assault; indeed, the Turks never tried it on again. But the garrison needed all its fortitude and optimism, for the conditions of life at Kut were simply wretched, and became almost intolerable as time went on. Many of the garrison were sick and wounded, and there was no spot secure from those showers of shrapnel and "whizz-bangs" which were known as the morning and evening "hate." The besieged were confined to the squalid buildings and streets of the town, as anyone who ventured on the bank of the Tigris for a little fresh air became an immediate target for the Turkish snipers on the other side. The place was infested with insects of the nastiest and most irritating kind; the weather turned very cold, and there was a shortage of fuel. As the prospect of relief became more remote the rations of food issued to the troops were reduced to very meagre proportions.

There were several days of heavy rain in January, and the trenches and streets were knee-deep in mud. Stores of grain and "ghee" (Indian butter) were found hidden by the Arabs, but there was nothing to grind the corn with. However, British aeroplanes flew over in February, and dropped millstones, in addition to bags of food, tobacco and mails, many of which the expectant recipients had the mortification to see fall into the river. Enemy planes also flew over the town and dropped bombs by day and night. The battery bullocks and mules were slaughtered for food, but there were no fresh vegetables, and scurvy broke out. Meanwhile the reports received by wireless from the Relief Force were not too encouraging—"a trench captured," "a position consolidated"—but not much nearer Kut. Before dawn on March 8th the garrison was thrilled by the sound of heavy gunfire—it must be Aylmer, attacking the lines of Ess Sinn, seven miles from Kut. It was, but the welcome sound gradually died away, and was never heard again. A Turkish messenger with a white flag and a summons to surrender received a decided refusal from General Townshend. Then the floods came, and the garrison knew that they would have to "stick it out" till April.

The Relief Force. General Younghusband's brigade had set out from Ali-el-Gharbi on January 3rd, followed by the rest of the force under General Aylmer for the relief of Kut. It included the two Indian divisions which had fought on the western front, and some English Territorial battalions from India. It was obliged to follow the winding Tigris, as this was the only means of trans-

port. The Turks had made strong lines of entrenchments at intervals of a few miles, chiefly up the north bank of the river, their flanks resting on the huge swamps which soon became lakes under the winter rain-storms. The last line of their defensive system was very formidable; it was linked up with redoubts and could not be turned, as north of the river it rested on lakes and marshes, and south of the river it curled round through Ess-Sinn to the Shatt-el-Hai.

Aylmer carried the first position at Sheikh Saad on January 8th. The Turks retired to the Wadi, and after a battle lasting two days were driven back to Um-el-Hanna. Aylmer's attack failed here, and he was held up for a month awaiting reinforcements. The weather was all against him, and as he could make no impression on Um-el-Hanna, he decided to march across the desert, south of the Tigris, and attack the Ess Sinn position straight away. So on March 7th came that wonderful silent march across the trackless waste, and at dawn on the 8th Aylmer was within seven miles of Kut. But he could not break through, and as he was unable to delay long so far away from his river transport, he had to march back to Um-el-Hanna.

General Aylmer was succeeded in the command by General Gorringe, and with the arrival of reinforcements early in April, Um-el-Hanna was carried trench by trench, and the next position at Falahiyeh was stormed the same night. There were now only two more lines between Gorringe and Kut—Sanna Yat and Ess Sinn—but the storms returned, and the floods rose and completely suspended further operations.

Surrender of Kut. In April the garrison at Kut were beginning to feel the pangs of starvation. Aeroplanes did their best to drop supplies, but the bags of food did not go far among so many. Amongst those who died at this time was General Houghton, one of Townshend's ablest lieutenants. As the rats desert a sinking ship so the Arabs began to desert to the Turks, till the latter announced that they would not receive any more, and sank a raft load of them crossing the Tigris. Gorringe made a last desperate effort at Sanna Yat on April 23rd, and next day sent off a food-steamer, the *Julnar*, to try and run the blockade. But it ran aground four miles from Kut, and after a splendid fight by Captain Cowley and his crew, fell into the hands of the Turks. On the 27th the last day's scanty rations were eaten at last, and Townshend opened negotiations with Khalil, the Turkish commander in chief. On the 29th he capitulated, having held out for 145 days—25 days longer than the siege of Ladysmith, and under much worse conditions. The Turks at first treated the survivors of the siege with

courtesy, and almost with kindness. The food on board the *Julnar* was distributed at Kut, the sick and badly wounded were sent down the river to Gorringe, the others were taken to Bagdad and thence to Constantinople and other places as prisoners of war. Their subsequent treatment was appallingly cruel.

On January 25th Townshend had told his troops that he confidently expected to be relieved sometime during the first half of February, and added "Our duty stands out clear and simple . . . we will make this defence to be remembered in history as a glorious one. You will all be proud to say one day 'I was one of the garrison at Kut.'" Surely, by holding out till the end of April, these words were amply justified.

A Long Pause. On May 20th, Gorringe captured the lines of Ess Sinn, and drove the Turks to the Shatt-el-Hai. But there was now no reason for a rapid and risky advance, and further operations were suspended during the heat of summer. Preparations for a future advance were pushed on by General Sir Percy Lake, who had succeeded Sir John Nixon in the chief command in January. Railways were laid down, and the medical arrangements, which had been quite unable to cope with the sick and wounded, were immensely improved.

General Maude took over the command in August, and continued the sound work which paved the way for his future triumphal progress to Bagdad. Profiting by the sad experience of the previous year, he left nothing to chance. Stores and munitions were now easily moved up from Basra to the front, and at the beginning of December everything was ready for an advance. The attack was carried out on the 12th. General Cobbe made a demonstration as if to assault the Sanna Yat position, while General Marshall, during the night, marched on the Shatt-el-Hai, and drove the Turks from the banks. He then crossed the river by pontoons, and the Turks fell back on Kut. Heavy rains and floods delayed further operations till the new year.

The Russians in Asia. The Russian armies of the Caucasus had been more or less inactive during 1915, but on the arrival of the Grand Duke Nicholas as Governor, preparations were begun for an invasion of Turkey-in-Asia. This was entrusted to General Yudenitch, and began early in January. In less than a fortnight the Turkish armies were scattered or driven back on Erzeroum. By February 16th this city—at one time a formidable fortress, but recently fallen into decay—was in the hands of the Russians, with prisoners by the thousand and guns by the hundred. From Erzeroum the Russians pushed westwards, and in April occupied Trebizond, the great port on the Black Sea. Southwards they got as

far as Mush, Bitlis and Lake Van, and seemed to be well on the way to Bagdad.

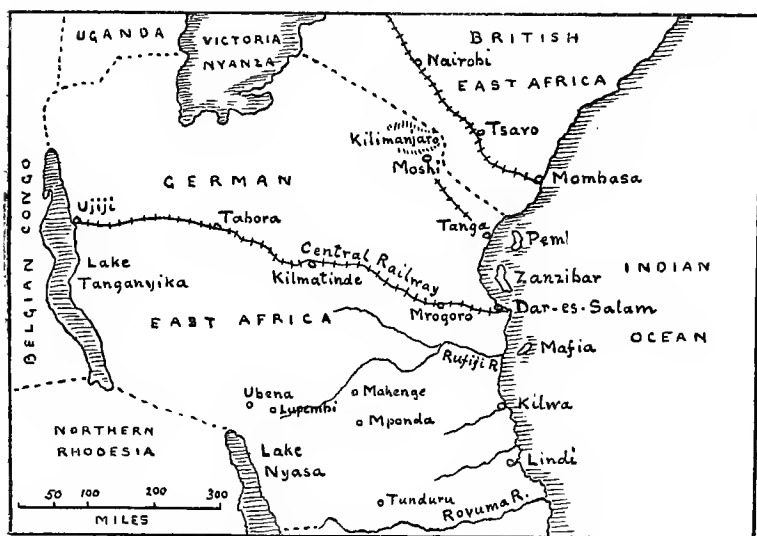
In August came the Turkish counter-attack, and the Russians were rolled back on Erzeroum, only to come on again and capture Bitlis and Mush. Meanwhile, in May, a Russian army had entered Persia to suppress a rebellion there in favour of the enemy, and a small force reached Khanikin, less than 100 miles from Bagdad. A party of Cossacks actually rode across country and joined hands with the British force at Ali-el-Gharbi on the Tigris. But the hopes raised by this good omen were not realised—neither British nor Russians got to Bagdad in 1916.

Egypt. Towards the end of 1915 a tribe of Arabs called the Senussi, on the western frontier of Egypt, had become very hostile. They made several raids over the border, and we found it advisable to retire from Sollum, the frontier port, for a time. An English steamer, the *Tara*, had been torpedoed in November, and her crew, nearly 100 in number, had landed on the coast of Tripoli. They had been seized by the Senussi, and were enduring a wretched captivity. In February the Senussi were routed and scattered by a splendid charge of the Dorset Yeomanry, and on March 14th General Lukin re-occupied Sollum. The Duke of Westminster pursued the Arabs with a fleet of armoured cars and motors, and making a wonderful dash of 70 miles across the desert, he rescued and brought back the crew of the *Tara*, who by this time were in a shocking condition of starvation and suffering.

In April attention was again called to the Eastern frontier. There was considerable activity in the desert, and it was evident the Turks were meditating another attack on the Suez Canal. The Australians and Yeomanry had several brushes with their advance guards, but the attack in force was held up by a rebellion which broke out against the Turkish rule (or misrule) in Arabia, and the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina fell into the hands of the Arabs. Meanwhile, we bombarded and bombed the Turkish base at El Arish from the sea and the air. The Turkish force, which included many Germans, and was much better equipped than their previous expedition, advanced on the Canal in August, but they never reached it. They found their old Gallipoli opponents—the Anzacs, Yeomanry, 52nd Division and East Lancs. Territorials—waiting for them at Romani, several miles east of the canal; their assault was furiously made and stubbornly resisted, and after two days' hard fighting the Turks were flying back across the desert, hotly pursued by our mounted troops. They lost 10,000 men, and nearly all their munitions and transport.

The Sinai Peninsula. Sir Archibald Murray thought it was

high time the Sinai Peninsula was cleared of the troublesome Turk, and great preparations were begun for a move eastwards across the "Wilderness." A railway was constructed along the coast to Mazar, and many miles of roads and water pipes were laid down far into the desert. A large force was collected at Ismailia, under General Sir Charles Dobell, and a special "Desert Column" of mounted troops and camel corps was formed under Sir Philip Chetwode. The Turks retired before our advance, and when the Desert Column reached El Arish on December 21st, they found the Turkish base deserted. The Turks had taken refuge at a strong



German East Africa.

position twenty-five miles inland, called Magdhaba, and here they were surrounded and forced to surrender by a mounted column under General Chauvel on December 24th.

Invasion of German East Africa. Several brigades arrived from South Africa early in the year, and in February General Smuts took over the chief command. He was faced with the tremendous task of driving the Germans across the frontier and rounding them up in a vast and difficult area of 350,000 square miles. He found that General Tighe had got everything ready for an attack on the Kilimanjaro district, and he decided to carry it

out before the rainy season set in. The operations were skilfully executed by Generals Van der Venter, Tighe and Sheppard. On March 5th three columns were directed against Taveta, which was almost surrounded by the mounted South Africans, and evacuated by the enemy on the ninth. They retired across the frontier, and by the 21st were south of the Ruwa River. General Smuts established his Headquarters at Moshi, and was able to give his troops a rest and re-organise his forces. He got to work again in the summer and a move was made towards the Central railway, which runs from the coast to Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika. The railway was cut on August 16th at Mrogoro, and in September Dar-es-Salam, the capital of German East Africa fell into our hands, and the ports of Kilwa and Lindi were occupied. Von Lettow then retired to the line of the Rufiji River. Meanwhile General Northey, advancing from the borders of Rhodesia, had taken Lupembe, and two Belgian columns were marching on Wahle's headquarters at Tabora. Wahle had to clear out. Tabora was occupied on September 11th and about a hundred British men and women, who had been shamefully ill-treated by the Germans, were rescued. The whole of the country north of the Central railway was now cleared of the enemy. Wahle tried to join Von Lettow, but found Van der Venter in his way; so dividing his forces into three columns, he turned south-west and tried to slip through Northey's posts. Two of his columns were surrounded and surrendered, but the third managed to join up with another German detachment at Mahenge.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WAR AT SEA. BATTLE OF JUTLAND.

German Raiders. Early in the year some excitement was caused by the doings of the *Moewe*, a German cruiser which had got loose and was roving the Atlantic disguised as a "tramp." As she approached her prey, her false bulwarks were dropped and she displayed her 6in. guns. In January she attacked and destroyed seven ships. One of them, the *Clan Mactavish*, put up a game fight against her. The captured crews were sent to America in the *Appam*, a West African liner. Seven more ships fell victims in the next three weeks, and the crews were put ashore at Teneriffe. The *Moewe* slipped through the blockade to Kiel early in March, after a trip which had proved somewhat expensive to the Allies. Another raider, an armed merchantman called the *Greif*, went out on a similar mission in February, but was not so fortunate. She fell in with the British auxiliary cruiser *Alcantara*, which tackled her, but got torpedoed and sunk. The *Andes* and *Comus*, however,

appeared on the scene and opened fire on the *Greif*; and after being repeatedly struck, the raider blew up and sank.

In the early morning of April 25th some German cruisers dashed across the North Sea, bombarded Lowestoft for twenty minutes, and then made off. Four people were killed and some damage done to private property; but the "destruction of the fortifications and important military buildings of Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth" (as announced in the German report) was an effort of Teutonic imagination.

Battle of Jutland. At last, on May 31st, the German "High Seas" Fleet left its harbours and sailed the North Sea. Von Hipper was in front with the battle-cruisers, steering north about eighty miles from the coast of Jutland. Von Scheer was some miles behind with the *Kaisers* and *Koenigs*. It so happened that on the same day the British Grand Fleet was also at sea, making one of its "periodical sweeps." Vice-Admiral Beatty was leading the way. He had with him two battle-cruiser squadrons, two light cruiser squadrons, several destroyer flotillas and a squadron of our newest and fastest battleships under Rear-Admiral Evan-Thomas. The Battle Fleet, under Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, was a considerable distance behind, to the north.

Beatty had just turned round to rejoin Jellicoe when, at 2.20 the *Galatea* signalled "enemy ships in the distance"; and a little later "enemy in force." Beatty changed his course to S.S.E. to cut off the enemy ships from their base, and soon smoke could be seen from his flagship, the *Lion*. The course was now altered to E. and a seaplane was sent up from the *Engadine* to scout. The seaplane returned at 3.30, and a minute later five German battle-cruisers could be seen between the *Lion* and the coast of Jutland, steering south. Von Hipper had sighted Beatty and was trying to rejoin Von Scheer's Battle-Fleet. Beatty closed on Von Hipper and opened fire at a range of ten miles. The Germans replied; they got the range at once and their aim was very accurate. In a few minutes the *Indefatigable* was struck by a shell, blew up and sank. Not long afterwards the finest ship in the British Navy, the *Queen Mary*, shared a similar fate. She was a battle-cruiser of 28,850 tons, 80,000 horse-power, 28 knots, with a crew of a thousand men, and she was noted for her excellent gunnery. Von Hipper had now five battle-cruisers (one or two badly hit) to Beatty's four, but he continued his flight towards his Battle-Fleet; the two lines steaming side by side at an interval of eight or nine miles.

Evan-Thomas' battleships had now come into action at long range with the rearmost German ships, and the enemy's fire was becoming less deadly. Twelve destroyers were sent out on a tor-

pedo attack and met fifteen enemy destroyers coming out on a similar errand. A fierce engagement took place; the enemy were driven back and several of our destroyers pressed home the attack and emptied their tubes with good results. Three of the German battle-cruisers were now pretty well out of action.

Soon after 4.30 the *Southampton*, scouting in advance, reported the enemy battle-fleet ahead. Beatty thereon changed his course and steered north, to lead the Germans to Jellicoe. Von Hipper also turned round and led Von Scheer's fleet northwards. And so the action was continued from five o'clock till six, as the two fleets steamed side by side about eight miles apart. The Germans were now getting more than they gave. One battleship was knocked clean out of the line, and another was torpedoed by the *Moresby* and disappeared in a "huge cloud of smoke and steam." The light was getting very bad, and it was not till nearly six o'clock that Beatty sighted our leading battleships five miles to the north, whereupon he changed his course to the east and "proceeded at the utmost speed" towards the head of the enemy's line. Three only of the German battle-cruisers were now visible, closely followed by battleships of the *Koenig* class.

When Jellicoe heard that Beatty was engaged with the enemy he steered S.E. to support him, some of his heavy battleships breaking all their previous records in the way of speed. Admiral Hood's battle-cruisers, being the fastest ships, were sent on ahead to turn the German line. At 5.20 they came within sound of the guns. Hood sent the *Chester* to investigate, and she was soon in the thick of the fight. It was on this ship and in this action that the boy Jack Cornwell, when badly wounded, stood bravely to his gun with all his comrades lying dead around him. Unfortunately, he did not live to wear the V.C. awarded to him for his heroic example. Hood brought his squadron into action "in a most inspiring manner, worthy of his great naval ancestors." The head of the German line was completely crumpled up by Beatty and Hood, and the enemy ships, describing a loop, made off to the S.W. But Hood's squadron came under close fire from the battleships; the *Invincible* was badly hit and the gallant Admiral went down with his flagship. Another Admiral also lost his life; Sir Robert Arbuthnot, with the armoured cruisers, in the uncertain light suddenly found himself in the midst of the *Koenigs* and *Kaisers*; his flagship, the *Defence*, was sunk and the *Warrior* and *Black Prince* badly knocked about. It was difficult to see what damage the enemy had sustained, but several ships had a heavy list and were on fire.

Before seven o'clock the positions and course of the fleets were

reversed. Von Scheer had looped the loop and was making S.W. through the gathering gloom, while Beatty, leading the British Fleet was also steering S.W. between the Germans and the coast of Jutland. The enemy were completely cut off and the only thing required now for a decisive victory was light; and this was denied us. But our light cruisers and destroyers kept in touch with the enemy and even tackled some of the big German ships single-handed. Beatty relates how the *Onslow* saw a German cruiser trying to torpedo the *Lion*. The *Onslow* closed with her and drove her off, and then went for a battle-cruiser, probably the *Derfflinger*. After being badly struck by a shell she returned to the light-cruiser and torpedoed her. Not content with this, she next tackled the battleships and discharged her remaining torpedoes. She was now so badly damaged that she had to stop. Another destroyer, the *Defender*, though suffering from a shell through her boiler, came to the rescue and took the *Onslow* in tow for the night.

When Evan-Thomas' big battleships came into action, led by the *Barham*, they "wrought great execution." One of them, the *Warspite*, a monster of 60,000 horse-power, had her steering gear so badly damaged that she spent some time in performing the manoeuvre known as "chasing her own tail" under a hot fire, but she was skilfully extricated. Nor were our battle-cruisers idle. They encountered two enemy battle-cruisers and two *Koenigs*; the *Lion* knocked one out of the line with a heavy list, and the *Princess Royal* set fire to another.

Jellicoe's Battle-Fleet was in action from 6.17 till 8.20 and "administered severe punishment," in spite of the poor light and the smoke-screen put up by the destroyers. The *Iron Duke*, Jellicoe's flagship, straddled a *Koenig* and knocked her out at the second salvo. But none of our battleships had a better record than the *Marlborough*. "This ship," says Jellicoe in his graphic despatch, "commenced at 6.17 p.m. by firing seven salvos at a ship of the *Kaiser* class, then engaged a cruiser, and again a battleship; and at 6.54 she was hit by a torpedo and took a considerable list to starboard, but reopened at 7.3 p.m. at a cruiser, and at 7.12 fired fourteen rapid salvos at a ship of the *Koenig* class, hitting her frequently until she turned out of the line." By nine o'clock the German Fleet had vanished, and the darkness made it necessary for the British Admirals to take precautions against torpedo attacks. However, thanks to the vigilance of the *Champion*, *Fearless* and other light-cruisers, no attacks were made on our big ships, but our own destroyers were busy, and though nothing could be seen, some terrific explosions were heard.

At daybreak on June 1st our fleet was west of the Horn Reef. No German ship was in sight, and after a lengthy search, Admiral Jellicoe was reluctantly compelled to return without reaping the full fruits of his victory. Our losses were heavy. Three battle-cruisers went down :—the *Queen Mary*, *Indefatigable* and *Invincible* ; the *Defence* was sunk, the *Black Prince* had to be destroyed and the *Warrior*, after being towed seventy-five miles by the *Engadine*, was abandoned. Eight destroyers were lost, all fighting gamely to the death. The German losses must have been much heavier than ours, though they did not admit it. At the lowest estimate we sank two or three battleships, two battle-cruisers, five light-cruisers and nine destroyers, while many of their damaged ships must have experienced the greatest difficulty in reaching port.

Minor Actions. On August 19th the German fleet put to sea again, but warned by their scouts of the approach of the British squadrons, they did not stay to fight. Two of our cruisers, *Falmouth* and *Nottingham*, sent on ahead to look for the enemy, were unfortunately torpedoed by submarines. This was the last appearance of the High Seas Fleet, but on October 26th, the Germans did what it is surprising they had not attempted before ; that is, they made a raid on our cross-Channel transport traffic. It was a very dark night and ten destroyers managed to penetrate the Straits of Dover. They succeeded in sinking an empty transport, the *Queen* (a well-known Calais-Dover boat in former days), before they were driven off by the destroyers of the Dover Patrol.

Submarines. A renewed activity in the submarine campaign broke out on March 1st, and many merchantmen were sunk without warning, Norwegian and Dutch ships being the greatest sufferers. A Channel passenger boat, the *Sussex*, was torpedoed in March, and a hundred lives were lost. The submarines did not always get the best of it. There were many instances of the intended victims showing fight and beating off or even ramming the submarine. When the Harwich steamer *Brussels* was captured in June, the Germans accused Captain Fryatt of ramming or trying to ram a U boat. He was tried by court-martial and shot ; an outrageous proceeding which caused the greatest indignation in England and America. The losses decreased during the summer, but the campaign was renewed with relentless vigour in November. The P. and O. liner *Arabia* was sunk near Malta, and even our hospital ships, which we had hitherto imagined were protected by the Red Cross, were singled out for special attention. The *Braemar Castle*, conveying wounded from Salonika to Malta, was sunk on November 14th and a week later the *Britannic*, our largest liner, was torpedoed in the Aegean. Fortunately there were no wounded on board,

and out of a thousand persons, crew, nurses and medical staff, only thirty-eight lives were lost. The French had two battleships torpedoed, the *Suffren* and *Gaulois*, which had figured conspicuously in the Dardanelles in 1915.

The improvement in the staying power and radius of their U-boats induced the Germans to build two super-submarines for peaceful purposes. These were named the *Deutschland* and the *Bremen*. The former actually made two voyages to America with valuable cargoes, and was joyfully hailed as the forerunner of a regular under-sea merchant service. The career of the *Bremen* was full of mystery. She appeared, disappeared and reappeared so often, and met with so many sad fates, that a modern Mrs. Gamp might be excused for exclaiming "I don't believe there was no such submarine."

CHAPTER VII.

SUMMARY. 1916.

The Year's Fighting. The struggle at Verdun and the Battle of the Somme were the two outstanding features on the Western Front in 1916. In the former the French, after being gradually pushed back for five months, had turned the tables on the enemy and recovered most of their lost ground. In the latter the British and French had broken through all the German defences on a front of twenty miles and reached the gates of Bapaume and Peronne. On the Eastern Front Brusiloff's summer offensive had been most successful, but had come to a sudden and rather mysterious end; and the invasion of Roumania in the autumn restored the advantage to the Germans before the end of the year. The Italians had repelled an invasion and captured Gorizia, but were still held up on the Isonzo and the Carso. The fall of Kut was a serious blow to our prestige in the east, but in December General Maude was beginning an advance which was destined to reach Bagdad and far beyond it. The Suez Canal was no longer threatened, and British troops were well on their way across the desert to Palestine. In East Africa General Smuts had at last gained the upper hand. A great naval battle had been fought, not a decisive victory, but sufficient to keep the German fleet interned in its own harbours. On the whole the situation was fairly satisfactory, though there was nothing in it to warrant the widespread belief that the Central Empires were on the verge of collapse, and that final victory was only a matter of a few months.

Conscription. The situation at the end of 1915 clearly showed that Britain would have to put her full fighting strength into the

field in order to see the war through to a successful end. The Derby Group System, after deducting the "starred," exempted and unfit, had failed to produce a sufficient number of single men to meet the requirements of the War Office and enable the Government to fulfil their pledges to the married men. Some measure of compulsion became necessary, and on January 5th, 1916, a Bill was introduced to enlist all single men between eighteen and forty-one. There was considerable opposition in some of the industrial and mining districts, but the feeling of the nation generally was in favour of it, and it was passed by a large majority. In May the Military Service Act was extended to include married men of military age, and conscription came into full force.

Air Raids. The Zeppelins continued to pay their unwelcome visits on dark nights. The first and perhaps the worst raid was on the last night of January, when seven Zeppelins wandered for hours over the Midland Counties, doing much damage and causing nearly two hundred casualties. L.19 was sunk on the return journey. There were three successive raids beginning on the last night of March; the casualties were heavy, but it was a great satisfaction to hear that L.20 had come down in the Thames off Sheerness and her crew had been captured. Another Zeppelin was lost returning from a raid in May. There were two raids at the end of July and three in August, mostly on the N.E. coast. Then came the great raid of September 2nd on London by thirteen airships, memorable for being the first occasion on which a raider was brought down by a British airman. This feat was performed by Lieutenant Leife Robinson, R.F.C., who got above it and attacked it with such effect that it fell, a blazing mass and a joyful sight for the inhabitants of London, in a field at Cuffley. Lieutenant Robinson was awarded the Victoria Cross. This did not put the Germans off, and on September 23rd twelve Zeppelins came over, but only two got to London. One was put to flight by our anti-aircraft guns and came down in a field in Essex. Its crew surrendered to a special constable. Another was destroyed in the air by Lieutenants Brandon and Sowrey. On October 1st ten Zeppelins were completely baffled by the gun-fire and one was brought down in flames by Lieutenant Tempest, R.F.C. The raiders left London alone after this, and tried the N.E. coast again, where two were brought down ablaze on November 27th. This was the death blow to the Zeppelins, but there was still the possibility of raids by aeroplanes, which had several times paid flying visits to Dover and Deal in the daytime and dropped a few bombs. On November 28th a plane flew over London and dropped nine bombs on the S.W. district. It was brought down off Dunkirk on its way home.

Fighting in the Air. The new German machine, the fast and powerful Fokker, seriously threatened our "ascendancy" in the air during the early part of the year. But the Fokkers were defensive machines; they rarely flew over our lines. The game was for them to wait until our airmen flew over their lines and then go for them. The two champions of this game were Immelmann and Boelke, whose rivalry created intense excitement in Germany, and they became national heroes. Immelmann just kept the lead, but he was killed on June 18th when he had eighteen victims to his credit—quite a lot in those days. Boelke pursued his career till he perished in a collision on October 28th, having accounted for forty victims. They were looked upon as good sportsmen, and English aviators dropped wreaths for their funerals, a compliment returned by the Germans when our most successful airmen lost their lives. Of the French flying men, Guynemer, Nungesser and Navarre rose to fame by their almost incredible exploits and the ever-increasing number of their victims, while in our own R.F.C. no one acquired a greater reputation than Captain Alfred Ball, leader of numerous successful flights and fights over the German lines.

By the summer we had greatly improved our machines both in pace and fighting power, and there were not wanting hundreds of daring and skilful pilots to guide the De Havilland to victory over the Fokker. In the Battle of the Somme aeroplanes were used as "contact patrols," that is, to report the progress of the infantry advance to the guns behind, so that the "creeping barrage" could be regulated. Our airmen also did useful work in keeping down the German "sausages" and bombing the infantry marching up to the trenches. The garrison towns and big factories on the Rhine were frequently bombed by allied airmen, and Krupp's works at Essen were visited by the French Captain Beauchamp, who a little later flew from France to Italy, dropping bombs on Munich by the way. Lieutenant Marschal flew over Berlin to Poland, and alighted within seventy miles of the Russian lines. Constantinople and Adrianople were also attacked by air from Salonika.

Rebellion in Ireland. In the summer of 1914 two volunteer armies, the men of Ulster and the Nationalists, were drilling with a view to settling the Home Rule question by force of arms. But on the outbreak of the war Sir Edward Carson and Mr. Redmond made a truce, and most of their followers turned their training to good account on the battlefields of Flanders and Picardy. Now there was a third party in Ireland called "Sinn Fein," openly disloyal to King and Government, and suspected of being in secret sympathy with the Germans. A recreant knight (Sir) Roger Casement, went over to Germany and tried to persuade the Irish

prisoners of war to join the Kaiser's legions. But he met with very little success. He attempted to get back to Ireland to take part in the Sinn Fein rebellion planned for Easter ; a Dutch tramp, carrying arms and ammunition for the rebels, was scuttled by her crew, but Casement managed to land on the Kerry coast from a submarine and was captured next day at Tralee.

The rebellion broke out in Dublin on Easter Monday (April 24th). The Sinn Feiners seized the Post Office and St. Stephen's Green, and erected barricades in Sackville-street. Martial law was proclaimed and troops were brought from the Curragh and from England to restore order. Fighting went on in the streets for a week before the rebels were ousted from their defences. The casualties were well over a thousand. Several of the Sinn Fein leaders were tried by court martial and shot. Two months later Roger Casement was found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death. He was hanged on August 3rd.

Death of Lord Kitchener. The greatest sensation of the year was the tragic death of Lord Kitchener. The startling news came on June 5th that Kitchener and his staff had been drowned at sea. Soon after the battle of Jutland he had embarked on the *Hampshire*, which was to take him to Russia for an Allied Conference. On the evening of June 4th the ship went down in a storm off the Orkneys ; she had struck either a rock or a mine. It is highly improbable that she could have been torpedoed. No boats could live in the angry sea ; there were only about half a dozen survivors, who spoke of having seen Kitchener standing calmly on the deck after the shock. Many people refused to believe that Kitchener had been drowned, and there were wild rumours of his being a secret prisoner in Germany.

About the same time France lost her "grand old man," the veteran General Gallieni, Military Governor of Paris, and the Germans lost Von Moltke, late chief of the staff. Old Field Marshal Von der Goltz, who had trained the Turkish armies, died at Bagdad of cholera. On November 21st the aged Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria, passed away. In happier times there would have been many sympathetic references to the old man whose long reign had been so full of trouble ; but the occasion only served for raking up the numerous scandals of the Hapsburg family. He was succeeded by his great-nephew, the Archduke Karl.

Changes in Command. Many changes in the High Commands took place during the year. In March Von Tirpitz ceased to rule the German Navy, and was succeeded by Admiral von Capelle. At the end of the summer Von Hindenburg became Chief of the Imperial Staff in succession to Von Falkenhayn. In December

General Joffre laid down his command after nearly two and a half years of arduous work. The rank of Marshal was revived in his honour. General Nivelle, of Verdun fame, who was English on his mother's side, became Generalissimo of the French Armies. No change took place in the British command. Sir Douglas Haig completed a year as commander-in-chief in France, and was promoted to the rank of Field-Marshal on the last day of the year. The Navy, however, saw a change. On December 4th Admiral Jellicoe went to the Admiralty as First Sea Lord in succession to Sir Henry Jackson, and Admiral Beatty took his place in command of the Grand Fleet.

Mr. Lloyd George Prime Minister. Towards the end of the year there was a growing feeling that the Coalition Cabinet of twenty-three was unwieldy, and that the Asquith Government was showing hesitation and delay in dealing with the vital problems of the war. On December 5th Mr. Asquith resigned, and the "Wait and see" Ministry was succeeded by the "Do it now" Ministry formed by Mr. Lloyd George. Mr. Balfour became Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Carson First Lord of the Admiralty, and Lord Derby took office as Secretary for War, a post held since July by Mr. Lloyd George. A special War Cabinet was formed, composed of the Prime Minister, Mr. Bonar Law (Chancellor of the Exchequer), Lords Milner and Curzon, and Mr. Henderson, the Labour Leader.

PART IV.—1917.

CHAPTER I.

THE HINDENBURG LINE. BATTLE OF ARRAS.

Serre and Gommecourt. The severe weather of the winter brought to an end the battles of the Somme and the Ancre, and there was a pause of two months. Towards the end of January a move was made north and south of the Ancre, which resulted in the capture of the ridges east of Beaucourt and Beaumont Hamel and the occupation of Grandcourt on February 7th. The next objective was Serre, the village which had held us up on the first day of the battle of the Somme. It soon became such a pronounced salient in the enemy line that it was abandoned on February 24th. The advance was then pressed northwards, and three days later Gommecourt fell into our hands.

The weather now took a turn for the worse ; a thaw set in, and the ground, which had been frozen hard to a great depth during the winter, became a quagmire over which it was impossible to move. About this time Sir Douglas Haig completed the taking over of the line from the French as far south as Roye, so that the British were now holding 110 miles of trenches. We were now up against the Loupart-Le Transloy line, which covered Bapaume, and had already taken the village of Irlles on March 10th, when a dramatic change occurred in the situation, which gave us a walk-over into Bapaume and far beyond.

German Retreat. It had been known for some time, both from the German papers and our own aeroplane observation, that the enemy were preparing a new and very strong defensive system to which they could retire "according to plan" if they found it convenient to do so. The Germans called it the Siegfried Line, but we gave it the name of the Hindenburg line, as a compliment to their master-strategist. It branched off the main line at Tilloy-les-Mofflains, two miles south-east of Arras, ran west of Cambrai and St. Quentin, and joined the main line again on the Aisne east of Soissons. Thousands of Russian prisoners had been employed during the winter on this wonderful line, which was the last word in impregnable defence. About the middle of March it was noticed that the German lines in the Somme district were very thinly held ; many of the trenches were quite empty, and it was evident that the great retreat had begun. On the 17th Haig gave the order for a general advance from Arras to Roye, and soon found himself in

possession of all the intricate and cunningly devised defences which had proved such costly obstacles to our progress. Bapaume was entered on the 17th and Peronne next day. The French advanced through Ham and Noyon, to the great joy of the rescued inhabitants, and pushed up the Oise towards La Fère.

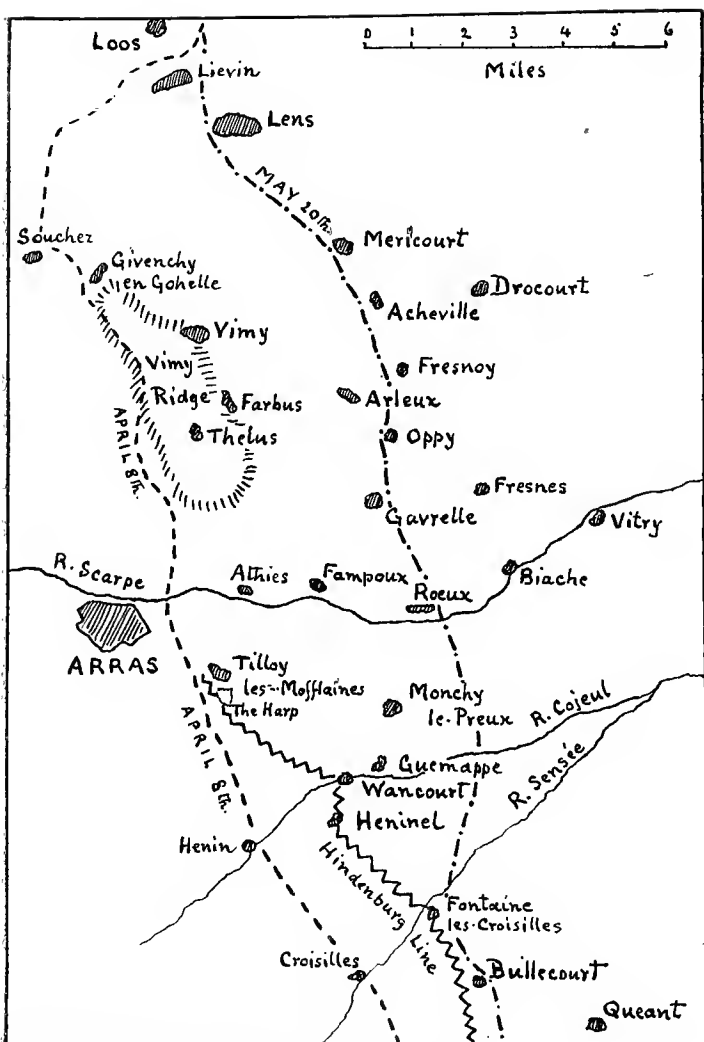
The stage management of the retreat left nothing to be desired. It was carried out with thoroughness and ruthlessness. The rear guards got away under cover of the fire of machine gun detachments, which hindered the pursuit. In some places we pushed the enemy rather faster than he was intending to go ; but very few prisoners and guns were taken. The country through which they retired was turned into a barren wilderness ; villages were looted and left little better than a heap of ruins ; even the fruit trees in the orchards had been hacked to bits. Every bridge, road and railway had been destroyed and every obstacle put in the way of our advance, but our Engineers worked night and day, and every difficulty was overcome. At Brie, where the highroad from Amiens to St. Quentin crosses the Somme, footbridges for the infantry were erected in one day, and on the third day the heaviest traffic was crossing the river. By the 1st of April we were within two miles of St. Quentin, and the increased resistance of the enemy made it plain that they were approaching their strong positions, and that the retirement was coming to an end.

Battle of Arras. At the suggestion of General Nivelle, Sir Douglas Haig had undertaken to attack the north end of the Hindenburg Line from Arras, while the French attacked the south end from the Aisne. The offensive from Arras was entrusted to the First Army (General Sir H. S. Horne) and the Third Army (General Sir E. Allenby) ; the Fifth Army (Gough) and the Fourth Army (Rawlinson) were to keep up a steady pressure on the Hindenburg Line towards Cambrai and St. Quentin. During the first few days of April our aviators gained an ascendancy in the air such as we had never had before, and a German plane hardly dared show itself above the lines. This was not accomplished without loss—twenty-eight planes in one day—but the bombing, photographing and spotting so thoroughly carried out were of the utmost service to our artillery, while the German guns were “ blind ” and powerless to reply to our bombardment. Our infantry divisions were massed for the attack in the vast cellars, vaults and underground galleries specially prepared for them at Arras, and went over the top on a twelve-mile front at 5.30 on April 9th. The first line—almost wiped out by our artillery—was rushed in forty minutes. By 8 o'clock we had most of the second line. By 9.30 Byng's Canadian Corps had scaled Vimy Ridge, a dominating height which had

baffled the Allies for over two years. The Seventeenth Corps seized the southern end of the ridge, dashed through Athies, and got as far as Fampoux, four miles east of Arras. These two corps accounted for something like 7,000 prisoners, whom they found hiding in their excavations, where for several days they had been imprisoned by our barrage without food or water. The infantry prisoners hurled bitter reproaches at their gunners for letting them down so badly, and the ill-feeling was so pronounced that they had to be separated. South of the Scarpe, near the junction of the Hindenburg Line, the Germans had a formidable redoubt, called, from its shape, the "Harp." This was taken by storm, and the garrison surrendered. By evening we had a footing in the third line along the whole front of attack.

The battle was continued the next two days in a blizzard of snow. The Canadians seized the last positions on Vimy Ridge, and the fortified village of Monchy-le-Preux, defended by nests of machine guns concealed in the sunken roads, was taken by tanks and cavalry. On the 12th, the fighting spread north and south on a forty mile front. The Hindenburg Line was pierced at Wancourt and Haninel, tanks playing an important part in the capture of these villages. North of the Scarpe the whole line was advanced as far as the Double Crassier at Loos; Lievin was taken and the Germans sought refuge in the coal mines of Lens. Violent but futile counter-attacks were made against Monchy-le-Preux and other points of the line; at Lagnicourt the enemy broke through, but had to retire, leaving 1,700 dead on the field. The six days' fighting in the snow, sleet, hail and rain yielded 14,000 prisoners and over 200 guns. Batteries were formed of the captured guns, which "strafed" the Germans with their own shells.

By April 15th Sir Douglas Haig had accomplished all he intended to do, and was anxious to break off the battle and get to work at Ypres; but Nivelle was just launching his big offensive on the Aisne, and Haig agreed to continue the battle to keep Prince Rupprecht busy and prevent him from sending reinforcements to the Crown Prince. The weather cleared up during the week's pause, and the Germans were hastening the completion of a new line to which they could fall back in case of need for the protection of Douai and Cambrai. This "Wotan Line" as they called it, ran from Drocourt to Quéant, where it joined the Hindenburg Line. Further south our Fourth and Fifth Armies were keeping the enemy well occupied; they captured Gouzeaucourt and Gonnelleu, two villages south-west of Cambrai, of which more will be heard later. On April 23rd an attack was made on a nine mile front east of Arras which brought us up against the "Oppy Line," a switch



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Battle of Arras.

of the Wotan Line. The villages of Gavrelle and Guémappe were carried by assault and 3,000 prisoners taken. Another attack on the 28th north of Oppy, resulted in the capture of Arleux by the Canadians. The enemy resistance had now become very stubborn. Many new divisions and heavy batteries had been brought up, and large numbers of aeroplanes flew in squadrons over their own lines. Progress became very slow, but the battle was serving its purpose of detaining large forces on the Arras front. Counter-attacks became the order of the day; the enemy had been turned out of positions which he could not afford to lose, and the persistence and violence of the attempts to regain Gavrelle and Guémappe showed that these villages had not been abandoned "according to plan."

In May we began to come up against the "pill-boxes," as our soldiers called them. They were reinforced concrete cylinders, sunk deep into the ground, with a steel lid on the top and armed with machine-guns. The Germans, losing faith in trenches and dug-outs from their recent experiences, had sprinkled their lines with these pill-boxes, which were difficult to tackle, and proof against anything except a direct hit from a shell. The fiercest fighting in May took place round Bullecourt and in the outskirts of Roeux, where we were held up by the Chemical Works, a slight variation from the "sugar refinery" which was the usual enemy stronghold. The Germans had one success, the recapture of Fresnoy, but we finally drove them out of Roeux, which marked the limit of our advance east of Arras. At Bullecourt an Australian battalion broke through the line and though practically surrounded they held on to their position for ten days. After several attempts to dislodge them had failed, the famous "Cockchafers" were called up to do the job, but as they approached, the Australians leapt from their trenches and went for them with the bayonet. Hardly a Cockchafer survived to tell the tale.

With the capture of Roeux and Bullecourt the Battle of Arras may be said to have come to an end. We had gained some sixty square miles of territory, including the formidable Vimy Ridge, had broken up nearly ten miles of the Hindenburg Line, materially assisted Nivelle's operations on the Aisne, and as the result of a month's fighting had captured 20,000 prisoners, 257 guns, 464 machine-guns and 227 trench-mortars. Sir Douglas Haig certainly had more reason for satisfaction than Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria.

Nivelle's Offensive on the Aisne. South of St. Quentin the German line crossed the Oise west of La Fère, enclosed the Forest of St. Gobain, and turning a corner north-east of Soissons, crossed the Aisne at Missy and ran along the south bank for about seven miles to Chavonne. It crossed to the south bank again at Berry-

au-Bac, and passed about three miles north-east of Rheims before taking an eastward turn towards the Argonne. Along the top of the ridges about four miles north of the Aisne runs a long road called the "*Chemin de Dames*"—the French had a footing on it at one point, Troyon. North of the road lies the valley of the Ailette, a stream flowing west into the Oise, and across the valley, some twelve miles north of the Aisne, the town of Laon. Nivelle's great offensive was directed against this line, and was expected to achieve marvellous results. In fact, Nivelle confidently asserted that he would reach Laon in one day. After a month's hard fighting he had not got to Laon or anywhere near it, and though some substantial progress was made in the first four days, the comparative failure of the battle was bitterly disappointing to the French, who had pinned their hopes on a decisive victory. It cost Nivelle his command.

After a terrific bombardment for nearly a week, the grand attack was launched on April 16th on a fifty mile front. By the 20th the French left (General Mangin) had crumpled up the corner north-east of Soissons, had driven the Germans across the Aisne between Missy and Chavonne, scaled the ridges north of the river and seized the greater part of the *Chemin des Dames*. In the centre, between Craonne and Rheims, they took Ville-au-Bois, but were held up at Brimont, north of Rheims. The French right, under General Anthoine, fought its way to the heights round Moronvillers and captured Auberive. Progress then became much slower; Craonne, a strongly fortified town at the east extremity of the *Chemin des Dames*, still barred the way, but towards the end of the month nearly all the plateau was in French hands and they had captured 20,000 prisoners and nearly 200 guns.

After a week's pause, the battle broke out again on May 4th. Craonne fell at last, and the French tried to push northwards from the *Chemin des Dames*; but though the fighting went on all through May and a little ground was won here and there, they never reached the Ailette. On May 15th General Pétain succeeded Nivelle as Commander-in-Chief of the armies in the field, and General Foch was appointed Chief of the General Staff at Paris.

Moronvillers. A few days after these changes General Anthoine's forces met with a remarkable success at Moronvillers. The *massif* which they were attacking was a series of hills rising to a height of 600 feet, and dominating the French positions east of Rheims. Early in the great battle the French had gained the summits, but had never been able to hold them for more than a few hours. The Germans had honeycombed these hills with tunnels and galleries, and one of them, Mont Cornillet, contained

one of the biggest underground retreats they had yet contrived. It consisted of three connected galleries, each 200 yards long, capable of holding three entire battalions. On May 20th, after a terrific bombardment of high explosive and gas shells, General Anthoine launched the 1st Zouaves against Mont Cornillet. Before they reached the top, a single German soldier, hands up and gasping for breath, came running down to meet them, and told them that his comrades were perishing in the tunnels. The Zouaves rushed over the summit and found that a 400 mm. shell had destroyed the ventilating shaft, and that the exits were wrecked and blocked up by the bombardment. When they forced an entrance they discovered the garrison lying in piles five or six deep, suffocated by fumes, gas and their own unavailing efforts to escape. That same day three other summits were carried : Mont Haut, Le Casque and Le Téton, and the French were able to entrench at the foot of the northern slopes. Over 6,000 prisoners were taken in this battle of Moronvillers.

Counter-Attacks. The French were now content to consolidate the positions they had won on the heights and hold them against the enemy counter-attacks, which were persistent and severe. They were not made by ordinary infantry, but by special battalions of picked men called *Sturmtruppen* and *Stosstruppen* (shock-troops). All through June these attacks went on, increasing in intensity till they reached a climax in July. Wave upon wave was launched against the plateaux called "California" and "Case-mates," in attempts to recover Craonne. The plateaux were littered with German dead ; but the French stood firm, and the whole of the Chemin des Dames remained in their hands with the exception of about a mile in the neighbourhood of Fort Malmaison.

CHAPTER II.

THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES.

The Mines of Messines. South of Ypres there is a ridge, on which stood the villages of Wytschaete and Messines. This ridge formed a salient in the German line, and it had dominated our positions since the end of 1914. Sir Douglas Haig had long foreseen that the capture of this high ground must be a necessary preliminary to a new offensive at Ypres. From this elevated position the Germans could overlook all our preparations above ground, but they could not see what was going on below the ground. For over a year miners from South Wales and Cornwall had been hard at work pushing forward shafts and tunnels and constructing nineteen huge mines under the ridge. Over 8,000 yards of galleries

were laid down and the mines were charged with a million pounds of ammonal. In February the enemy discovered what was going on, and began to countermine and discharge "camouflets" to interfere with our working.

Sir Douglas Haig waited for the conclusion of the battle of Arras before tackling the Messines Ridge. But he did not put his whole trust in mines. Under the direction of Sir Herbert Plumer the infantry attack was carefully rehearsed; the R.F.C. "cleared the air" and the artillery put up a bombardment which surpassed even that of Arras. At 3.10 a.m. on June 7th the mines were exploded. No one could foretell from experience what the result of such a record explosion would be like, but Sir Douglas tells us that it "reflected the very highest credit on those responsible for the planning and construction of the mines." The "bang" was heard in Surrey and large portions of the ridge were literally hurled up in the air. At the same moment our troops dashed up the ruined slopes with our shells whistling over their heads, and in three hours they had cleared the crest. Everything went like clockwork; Irishmen fought their way through Wytshaete Wood and New Zealanders captured the wrecked village of Messines. At a point called Fanny's Farm we were held up by machine-guns, but a tank came up and destroyed the nest. In some places our advance was so rapid that the tanks could not keep pace. The afternoon was occupied in chasing the enemy, or what was left of them, down the eastern slope of the ridge, and by 3.45 we reached our objective, the village of Oostaverne. Over 7,000 prisoners were collected on that day. All the next day our troops were busy destroying pill-boxes and clearing the woods. The enemy counter-attack was a failure, and the ridge—such as it was after the explosion—remained in our possession. It was in this battle that Major Willie Redmond met a soldier's death, fighting side by side with the men of Ulster.

Disaster on the Dunes. Sir Douglas Haig was now able to get on with his preparations for the coming battle at Ypres. The First French Army (General Anthoine) was brought up north of Ypres, and Rawlinson's Army took the place of the French between the Belgians and the coast. On the sand-dunes east of the Yser, between Nieuport and the sea, were two English battalions—the Northhamptons and the King's Royal Rifles—the canal at their backs and such defences to protect them as could be made out of sand. At 6 a.m. on July 10th the Germans commenced a fierce bombardment from massed batteries brought up for the purpose. All day long, with two short intervals, the fire was continued and increased in intensity as the day went on. The feeble defences

were quickly obliterated and the bridges over the Yser destroyed. The suffering battalions could not retire and no help could be sent. At 7 p.m. came the grand assault by a division of German marines. The survivors of the two battalions fought desperately till nightfall but were all wiped out except a remnant of seventy men who escaped by swimming across the Yser.

Third Battle of Ypres, July 31st. As July went on a furious bombardment, increasing to an intense drum-fire, heralded the approaching battle. From Anthoine's Army north of Boesinghe, from Gough's Fifth Army north and east of Ypres, a continual shower of heavy shells was poured on the German positions, and this was carried on by Plumer's Second Army as far south as the Lys. The Germans withdrew from the Yser at Boesinghe on the 25th, and two days later Anthoine's right wing and Lord Cavan's Guards Division were able to cross the canal by seventeen bridges.

Zero was fixed for 3.50 a.m. on the 31st. In front of the assaulting troops blazing oil and some hot stuff called "thermit" were served out to the Germans, who did not appreciate these improvements on their own inventions. The morning was misty, and heavy rain-clouds blew low over the war-scarred terrain. Our aviators, skimming like swallows close to the ground, pumped lead on the enemy from a few feet above. Anthoine's forces seized Steenstraate and Het Sas, and cleared the Germans out of Bixschoote. The Guards did not stop till they had crossed the Steenbeek and almost reached Langemark. But the feat of the day was performed by two gallant Welsh battalions. They stormed Pilkem Ridge and bombed the boastful "Cockchafers" out of their concrete cellars in the village, capturing hundreds of prisoners. A Territorial Division fought its way to St. Julien, and the Hertfordshires dashed far beyond. They met a German counter-attack in great force, and were retiring on St. Julien, when the enemy turned their fire on another body of Germans coming in to surrender; and after mowing down their comrades they were themselves mown down by their own barrage. South of St. Julien were two strong points bearing the homely names of Plum Farm and Apple Villa, doubtless given to them by our Tommies as a compliment to their favourite jam. These buildings, reinforced with tons of concrete many feet thick, were stormed by Lancashire battalions, as was also the formidable Pommern Redoubt. Westhoek Village was reached and there was very stiff fighting along the Menin Road in the direction of "Clapham Junction." We drove in the German first line, but were held up by Glencorse Wood and Inverness Copse. Frequent counter-attacks were made during the night and we lost our hold on Westhoek.

The Second Army also made a big advance this day ; the left wing captured Hollebeke and the New Zealanders on the right took La Basse Ville. July 31st was a great day. Two or three more such days would have given us the Passchendaele Ridge with far-reaching possibilities ; but the battle was to drag out for many weary weeks before that object was attained.

August. Langemarck. The next four days it poured with rain. The condition of the ground can be imagined : pitted as it was with shell-craters, from a sea of mud it soon became submerged and many men were drowned in the deep pools. Nor was the German system of defence easy to penetrate under the most favourable circumstances. We were up against the German Fourth Army, commanded by General Von Armin, who had fought against us at the Somme, and was the originator and chief exponent of the "pill-box" system. After taking their first line we found ourselves among a maze of entanglements joining up concrete strongholds which had each to be taken separately ; and behind these were the "Stosstruppen," ready to dash forward when our men were in difficulties.

Desperate fighting went on every day for weeks, but we can only mention the most notable days of this wet August. On the 3rd the Hertfordshires holding out at St. Julien were relieved, and on the 10th the high ground at Westhoek was again in our hands. On the 15th a diversion was made by General Horne's Army at Loos, when the Canadians stormed Hill 70 and the mining villages beyond. Ludendorff, who particularly disliked the Canadians, sent the Prussian Guard to dislodge them, but they were almost wiped out in the attempt. Next day (16th) a big attack was made at Ypres. The French advanced to Die Grachten and English troops carried Langemarck, and pushed half a mile beyond it. It rained hard for the rest of the month and beyond a little progress in Glencorse Wood and Inverness Copse little more was done. The weather and the pill-boxes were too much for us.

September. Polygon Wood. Sir Douglas Haig now brought up Plumer's left towards the Menin Road, and as the weather showed some improvement, planned a big attack for September 20th. But luck was against us, as a steady rain set in during the night before. However, the attack was made and resulted in a gain of three-quarters of a mile on an eight mile front. Opposite Frezenburg and Fortuin there were numerous fortified buildings rejoicing in fancy names : "Gallipoli" and "Iberian Farm" were dealt with by the West Lancashires, while Potsdam Redoubt and Vampire Farm fell to Scotchmen and South Africans. Inverness Copse and Glencorse Wood were at last cleared by Australians and

North Country troops, who pushed on to Polygon Wood and captured Veldhoek. Along the Menin Road we almost got to Gheluvelt, while south of the road the enemy was driven from the collection of swamps known as Dumbarton Lakes. The day's fighting showed that we had at last discovered a way of dealing with the pill-box system and the machine-gun nests in the woods. The next advance, on the 26th, gave us Zonnebeke and the whole of Polygon Wood, and seven attempts by Stosstruppen to recover the lost ground were beaten off.

October. Poelecappelle and Gheluvelt. Our next attack on October 4th was accompanied by a heavy gale and showers of rain, but nevertheless it met with a wonderful and quite unexpected success at the very outset. We just anticipated a German counter-attack by ten minutes. Three fresh divisions had been brought up for an attack on the ground we had gained on September 26th, and we caught them as they were massing for the assault. Our barrage got them in the open and our bayonets did the rest; as an effective force the three divisions ceased to exist. In some places we advanced over a mile, got a footing on the Passchendaele Ridge and the villages of Poelecappelle, Gravenstafel, Broodseinde and Reutel. Five thousand prisoners were taken on this day. On the 9th a push was made between Zonnebeke and Langemarck, which gave us more of the ridge, while our Guards and the French advanced to the outskirts of Houthoult Forest.

The weather cleared up a bit about the middle of the month and another push was planned for the 26th. "At an early hour on that morning," says Sir Douglas Haig, "rain unfortunately began again and fell steadily all day." However, the Canadians pushed on up the Ridge towards Passchendaele while the R.N.D. and London Territorials made progress on their left through the flooded lowlands. English troops entered Gheluvelt of "First Ypres" fame, but their rifles were choked with mud and they could not defend themselves against counter-attacks. Next day the French and Belgians advanced across the "Merkem Peninsula," a large tract of marshy ground between the Yser and Houthoult Forest. On the 30th the Canadians captured Crest Farm, south-west of Passchendaele, and beat off the Stosstruppen with the German machine-guns they had taken.

November. Passchendaele. We now reach the last stage of this long and stubborn battle. The autumn was far spent and the country was waterlogged. "It was only on the main ridge," says the Commander-in-Chief, "that much could be effected"; so he decided to have Passchendaele before closing down for the winter. At 6 a.m. on November 6th the Canadians delivered the

assault ; by eight o'clock the pill-box defences were overcome and the Canadians were clearing the enemy out of the village. Before nine they had beaten off a counter-attack. More ground was captured north of Passchendaele on the main ridge, and the positions made secure for the winter.

This was the end of the Third Battle of Ypres, in which we had got back all we had lost in the previous battles and a bit more. Never was such a long battle fought under such miserable conditions ; the enemy resistance was stiffer than anything we had met with for a long time, and the devotion of their machine-gunners who held their isolated posts in the face of almost certain death was only equalled by the gallantry of our men who stormed them. The casualties were very high on both sides—the Germans' higher than ours—and we took 24,000 prisoners.

CHAPTER III.

VERDUN—MALMAISON—CAMBRAI.

French Success at Verdun. General Pétain, the new French Generalissimo, had two objects in view for the late summer and autumn. The first was to restore the line at Verdun to the positions occupied before the great German offensive in February, 1916. General Nivelle had regained some of the ground on the east bank of the Meuse, but on the west the Germans were still holding the summits of Mort Homme and Hill 304. The French commander on the spot was General Guillaumat, and against him was the army of Von Gallwitz. There was a German attack from the western heights in July, followed by a successful French counter-offensive, but the big battle did not begin till August 17th. The summits of Mort Homme and Hill 304 were swept by high-explosive shell and the enemy were practically imprisoned in the tunnels they had driven under the hills. Their dumps of mustard-gas shells, on which they placed great reliance, were exploded by the bombardment and the Germans suffered the agonies intended for the French. The grand assault was delivered on the 20th on both sides of the river. The Germans were driven from Avocourt Wood, Mort Homme and the Bois de Cumières, and chased over the Goose's Ridge into Crows' Wood. On the east side the French won Talou Hill (in the loop of the river) and pushed forward as far as Mormont Farm. The battle was continued till the 27th, and though progress was slower than on the first day, the gains included Hill 304 and Regnéville on the left and Samogneux on the right. The week's fighting yielded over 10,000 prisoners. The old salient was restored and Verdun was out of range of the German guns. All that the

enemy could now do was to send their aeroplanes across by night and bomb the French hospitals behind the lines.

Malmaison. Pétain's second object was to clear the ridges north of the Aisne and drive the Germans towards Laon. The enemy still held a portion of the Chemin des Dames near the western end, and this sector was selected for the attack on October 23rd, which was entrusted to the Sixth Army under General Maistre. The most prominent post in the German line was Fort Malmaison: it was surrounded by quarries which gave good cover from view, but were not proof against the French artillery, and before the actual assault was made, half the work had been done. The French advanced two and a half miles that day and took 8,000 prisoners. Next day the enemy was being pushed down the slopes of the ridges through the Forest of Pinon, and by the end of October Von Boehm's army was at the bottom of the Ailette Valley, completely dominated by the French on the heights.

Byng's Advance on Cambrai. When the British front was reorganised in June, the Fourth and Fifth Armies were moved north, and the Third Army was facing the Hindenburg Line from Arras to St. Quentin. General Allenby left to take command in Palestine, and was succeeded by another distinguished cavalry leader, General Sir Julian Byng, who had recently commanded the Canadian Corps which took Vimy Ridge. The Hindenburg Line was fairly quiet all through the autumn; it was thinly held by the enemy, but it bristled with machine-guns and there were Stosstruppen lurking in the background. Byng's attack on the strong Cambrai position, early in the morning of November 20th, was a complete surprise. It was not advertised in the usual manner by an artillery preparation. The first intimation the enemy had that anything unusual was happening was the appearance of a long line of tanks, crushing down all obstacles and clearing the way for our infantry. On an eight mile front, from Moeuvres to Gonnelleu, this novel attack broke through the Hindenburg Line and carried everything before it. The villages of Flesquières and Ribecourt were captured and the advance pushed on to Marcoing on the Escaut Canal. The Germans brought up reserves during the night and there was stiff fighting the next two days. We crossed the canal at Masnières and our advance troops took Fontaine Notre Dame on the outskirts of Cambrai, but were not in sufficient force to hold it. Three days' hard fighting gave us Bournon Wood on our left.

General Byng, having done all he could with the limited number of troops at his command, now called a halt. He had broken through the Hindenburg Line, driven the enemy back five

miles towards Cambrai and captured 10,000 prisoners and 150 guns. The news of Byng's "break through" was received with great joy in England. It came at a period of depression and this local success was hailed as a glorious victory, the forerunner of more to come. In response to popular clamour, the bells of St. Paul's and many churches were rung to celebrate the event. People had evidently forgotten Walpole's famous remark: "They are ringing their bells now; they will soon be wringing their hands."

Unfortunate Sequel. On November 30th it was our turn to be taken by surprise. Huge reserves had been brought up by the enemy and early in the morning of that day they were launched against both ends of the salient created by our advance. At the southern end there was a disaster. The attacking waves swept over our forward line and were on our artillery before we realised what was happening. On they dashed through Gonnelleu towards Gouzeaucourt, carrying everything before them. Gouzeaucourt was so far behind our lines that it was considered quite secure, and our men in their billets were caught at their morning ablutions, and brigadiers in pyjamas were running hither and thither to rally any men they could find to defend the village. But the impetus of the attack was so great that it swept through Gouzeaucourt and a mile beyond. Fortunately, somewhere behind Gouzeaucourt, our Guards Division was having a well-earned rest after three days' hard fighting in Bourlon Wood. At the first news of an attack they dashed forward, and aided by a dismounted cavalry force, motor machine-guns and tanks, they stopped the advancing Germans, hurled them back through Gouzeaucourt and recaptured the village. Gonnelleu was retaken next day, with many of the guns we had lost.

The German attack on Bourlon Wood was made two hours after the attack on Gonnelleu, and was not so successful, owing to the devoted stand made by certain detached units in defence of the wood. A company of London Fusiliers stuck to their post till the last man was killed, and an Essex battalion held a council of war and resolved to fight to the last and have "no surrender"—a resolution which they kept. However, we had to withdraw from Bourlon Wood, and altogether gave up about half the ground we had gained. We lost several thousand prisoners, over a hundred guns and a number of tanks in this unfortunate business. An enquiry was held into the disaster at Gonnelleu, and it was found that no one was to blame—as Mr. Bultitude used to say, "It was the kind of thing that might have happened to anybody." The truth is, probably, that General Byng was short of reserves to relieve the weakened battalions which had made the attack.

Position in December. This was destined to be our last attempt at an offensive for a long time. All through November and December there was a constant flow of German divisions from Russia to reinforce their armies on the Western Front. The Allied Armies, exhausted with fighting at Ypres and on the Aisne, and at the same time sending help to Italy, had no such reserves to draw upon. It became clear that the next offensive would be on the part of the enemy, when the Allied Generals would be hard put to it to hold the line we had already won. It was a period of anxious suspense. No one could tell when or where the blow would fall.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

German Influences in Russia. The collapse of Brusiloff's offensive through lack of reserves and munitions, and the failure to support Roumania had given rise to the suspicion that there was something wrong with Russia. Rumour was rife in 1916 that there were sinister influences at work in Court circles, and that there was corruption and mismanagement in the conduct of the war, but the swift and sudden revolution came as a surprise and a shock. The rule of the Tsars had been for ages the most autocratic in the world, and it was founded on an iron discipline and the devotion felt by the army and peasantry to the "Little White Father." There was a parliament, called the Duma, which frequently tried to assert itself, but was as frequently over-ridden by the advisers of the Tsar. The Prime Minister in 1916, Sturmer, was a pro-German; and after his downfall Prince Golitzin, a man of the same stamp, came into power. But the most unpopular and suspected member of the Government was Protopopoff, Minister of the Interior. It was clear that Russia could not put forth her full effort in the war while such men were in power. As for the Tsar himself, he seems to have been devoted to the cause of Russia and the Allies, and there is no evidence that he was contemplating a separate peace with Germany, as was unkindly asserted by his enemies as an excuse for the revolution. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the Empress, whose one aim in life was to secure the throne to her young son, and whose heart, to say the least of it, was not in the war.

Some light was thrown on the condition of the Russian Court by a sordid tragedy which was enacted at the very close of 1916. A dissolute and disgusting fellow called Gregory Rasputin, who posed as a "Holy Man," had, by means of his long hair and beard and hypnotic eyes, acquired an extraordinary fascination over a

section of Petrograd society, and exercised a mysterious influence over the Empress herself. She believed that the health of the delicate Tsarevitch was in some strange manner dependent upon the presence and good-will of this wretched impostor; and he was in such favour that he practically ruled the Court and Government. He was in the pay of Germany, and the only way to save Russia seemed to be to get rid of him. All other means proving futile, Prince Yutusoff took the law into his own hands and shot him dead on December 29th. But his death did not save Russia.

Outbreak in Petrograd. For some time the people of Petrograd had been discontented with the Government and bitterly hostile to the thousands of police who kept order ruthlessly in the capital, but there was nothing to foreshadow a revolution. It was not got up by any particular persons or class; it came quite suddenly and naturally, following the course of events rather than guiding them. There was a shortage of food. The poorer people were starving and could not obtain bread, and there was a suspicion that the authorities were holding up large supplies of grain and flour from Petrograd. In the first week of March crowds of people were besieging the bakers' shops and parading the streets in gangs. Troops sent to restore order made friends with the crowd, but the hated police tried to clear the streets with machine-guns from the roofs of the houses, two hundred people being killed. More regiments were ordered up, but they refused to fire on the mob. On the 12th the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul was seized by the soldiers. The people soon got the upper hand over the police, and the unpopular Protopopoff fell into their hands. The Duma tried to assert some authority without much success, and the power of guiding the revolution fell to the Committees of Workmen and Soldiers, known as the Soviets. By the 14th the revolution at Petrograd was complete.

Abdication of the Tsar. While these events were happening in Petrograd, the Tsar was with the Army on the Northern Front. In reply to a message from the President of the Duma, he announced that he was sending General Ivanoff with troops to quell the disturbances, and that he himself was following. But neither Ivanoff nor the Tsar reached Petrograd. They were both held up at Pskoff, where they learned that the armies of Russky and Brusiloff had declared for the revolution. On the 15th, in his train at Pskoff, the Tsar wrote out and signed his abdication, passing over his son and handing on the throne to his brother, the Grand Duke Michael. But this did not suit the Soviets. They wanted a republic, and a provisional government was formed with Prince Lvoff as Prime Minister, Miliukoff Foreign Minister, and a young lawyer, Kerensky,

of whom more anon, Minister of Justice. And thus, in a week, with the greatest of ease and very little bloodshed, was the most absolute monarchy of modern times overthrown. But now the difficulties began. The Central Soviet in Petrograd was not united. Roughly it consisted of two parties, the Maximalists (or Bolsheviks as they were called later), who ignored the war and were out to revolutionise Europe, and the Minimalists, who embraced the new liberty for the greater glory of Russia. A struggle soon broke out between these two parties, and it was the triumph of the Bolsheviks which led to the downfall of their country.

Effect on the Army. The Revolution was hailed with approval by the Allied Press. Russia was likened to a giant aroused out of a long sleep or shaking himself free from his shackles, and the overthrow of the Tsar was held up as a terrible warning to the Kaiser, whose turn would come next. But the supposition that the revolution was due to the desire of the Russian people to "get on with the war" proved to be unfounded. A great part of the population and many of the soldiers were really getting rather tired of the war and wanted peace. There was a total loss of discipline in the army which did not improve its prospects in the field. Soldiers no longer saluted their officers, and the death-penalty for desertion was abolished. When the soldiers were told that they were "free," thousands took it literally, and left the front to share in the distribution of the property of the Grand Dukes which had been promised them. Officers were to be elected by the soldiers themselves, and were under the orders of the Soviet, not of their generals. Each battalion became a kind of debating society in which it was decided by vote whether an order should be obeyed or not. In the Navy matters were even worse. The Baltic Fleet was in a state of open mutiny, the sailors refusing to recognise any authority whatsoever. Gutchkoff, Minister of War and Marine, left the Government and joined the Army. Alexeieff, in despair, resigned the chief command and was succeeded by Brusiloff. The ablest and most energetic member of the Government, the young lawyer Kerensky, visited the armies at the front, making fervent speeches, urging and imploring the soldiers to obey their generals and fight for their country. He did not appeal in vain: many "battalions of death" were formed, pledged to fight to a finish, and the prospects of Russia began to look brighter.

Brusiloff's Last Offensive. Meanwhile the Germans and Austrians were lying low and forbearing to press an offensive against the demoralised Russian Armies. They thought they saw a surer and quicker way to a peace on their own terms, and their agents were at work in Petrograd, where they easily gained the support

of the Bolsheviks, or "peace at any price" party. Believing that the Russians had no longer the desire nor power to fight, they moved many of their best troops and big guns to the Western Front. But they reckoned without Brusiloff and Kerensky, who were planning an offensive to restore the fighting spirit of the Russian armies. It was a big push towards Lemberg from the region of the Dniester, and was launched on July 1st. It came as a complete surprise and somewhat of a shock to the Austro-Germans covering Halicz, and for a fortnight the Russians met with astonishing success. North of the Dniester they advanced on Brzezany and in three days took nearly 20,000 prisoners. South of the river the attack was made by the army of Korniloff, a Cossack general who now leapt into fame. Earlier in the war he had been a prisoner in Austria, and made a romantic escape by way of Hungary and Roumania. He had recently been Military Governor of Petrograd. Sweeping everything before him, he made 7,000 prisoners on the first day of his advance (the 8th); on the 10th the two armies met and captured Halicz and on the 11th Korniloff reached Kalusch, half way to Stryj. But now the advance was held up by the weather and German reserves. Hard fighting went on for several days, but no further progress was made and Korniloff had to evacuate Kalusch.

Russian Retreat. And now we have to tell the painful story of the Russian flight. We have previously seen them making glorious fighting retreats to hit out once more at the enemy, but this time they simply threw down their arms and ran away. The losses in the fortnight's fighting had been heavy, the "battalions of death" were almost wiped out, the spirit of the offensive died out, and the troops showed a disposition to retire. It began in the army north of the Dniester. The soldiers refused to obey their officers; the sight of a few German horsemen would put a whole battalion to flight, and soon the very mention of the word "cavalry" was enough to cause a panic-stricken rush to the rear. Korniloff was also forced to retire; his army became disorganised and lost all discipline. Officers tried in vain to rally the fugitives, and when they were deserted by their men, formed themselves into little companies and resisted to the death. A fleet of British armoured cars, under Commander Locker-Lampson, M.P., did splendid service in covering the retreat and keeping off the advancing enemy. But individual efforts of heroism were of no avail; the Russian Army, as a fighting force, had ceased to exist, and on July 23rd the Germans entered Tarnopol. To Korniloff fell the hopeless task of trying to rally the broken armies, and with the help of the armoured cars some stands were made east of Tarnopol, but the

line could not be restored, and before the end of the month the Russians were driven across the frontier.

A very different spirit was shown in Roumania. General Averescu hit out in Southern Moldavia, advanced twelve miles on a twenty mile front, and took many prisoners and guns. Von Mackensen had his work cut out to stem these attacks, and it was not till Averescu was deserted by his Russian Allies that the Roumanians were forced to withdraw. Though the Bukovina was lost, very little impression could be made on the Moldavian front against the patriotic resistance of the Roumanians.

The Bolsheviks. A Russian defeat was a Bolshevik victory, and these traitors to their country thought it a suitable occasion for a rising in Petrograd. The Bolshevik leader was an "International Socialist" named Vladimir Ulianoff, better known by the name of Lenin. He had been a political exile for many years and in April returned to Russia from Switzerland, travelling through Germany in a special train. He ran a newspaper which was openly pro-German and invited the Russian soldiers to lay down their arms and fraternise with the enemy. His right-hand man was another returned refugee named Leon Trotsky. The Bolshevik rising, after much bloodshed on both sides, was suppressed by the Cossacks, and Lenin and Trotsky went into hiding. Kerensky, who had now become Prime Minister and wanted to conciliate all parties, refused to take any proceedings against them, a decision which he lived to regret.

Moscow Conference. Kerensky honestly thought that he was the only man who could save Russia. As Prime Minister he wanted to have all the power and authority in his own hands, and he became jealous and suspicious of any possible rivals. On August 2nd Brusiloff was dismissed from the chief command of the armies, and Korniloff appointed in his stead. But Korniloff's insistent demands for the restoration of discipline in the army annoyed Kerensky, and they quarrelled. Kerensky was very anxious to unite all the conflicting elements under himself as head of the Government, and for this purpose he summoned a conference at Moscow. Before this took place the ex-Tsar and his family were removed from Tsarkoe-Selo to Tobolsk in Siberia, to be out of the way of the Bolsheviks. Two thousand delegates from the Soviets and Dumas met at Moscow on August 25th. Kerensky took up his quarters at the palace and drove about in the Imperial cars. He did not want the generals at the conference, but they insisted on coming, and he "cut" Korniloff when he met him in the street. At the conference Kerensky enlarged on the deplorable condition of Russia—the generals, Alexeieff, Korniloff and Kaledin, leader of the

Cossacks, enlarged on the deplorable condition of the army. Alexeieff cited an instance of a regiment being ordered to charge, and the command was obeyed by twenty-eight officers, twenty N.C.O.'s, and two privates. The generals insisted that politics could wait till the Germans were beaten. Kerensky, who was a politician and naturally wanted to talk politics, lost his temper, and pursued his policy of reconciliation by alternately abusing and threatening the Bolsheviks and the generals. In the end he gave the generals to understand that he would do his best for the army.

Kerensky and Korniloff. When Kerensky got back to Petrograd he found that while he had been wasting words at Moscow the Germans were beginning an offensive against Riga. At the beginning of September Von Hutier's army crossed the Dwina without much opposition and encircled the town of Riga, which, in the demoralised state of the Russian army became an easy prey. A few Russian battalions fought to the death, but whole divisions retired without firing a shot, and the way to Petrograd lay open to the enemy. Disorderly crowds of soldiers and sailors flocked to the capital and another Bolshevik rising became imminent, likely to be much more formidable than the last. Kerensky was alarmed; he could not trust the troops in the capital and he was forced to apply to Korniloff for help. On September 5th he despatched Savinkoff, Minister of War, to Korniloff's Headquarters at Mogileff with a request for troops to deal with the expected revolt. Korniloff sent the Third Cavalry Corps, under General Krymoff, to Petrograd, and asked Kerensky to come to Mogileff, where he would be safe. Kerensky assented to this by telephone. But Kerensky did not go to Mogileff; he changed his mind and came to terms with the Soviet. When Krymoff arrived at the outskirts of Petrograd he was met by troops from the garrison, upbraided for coming and ordered to lay down his arms. There were no signs of a Bolshevik rising, and discovering that his communications had been cut behind him and seeing that he had been fooled, Krymoff shot himself. Kerensky now denounced Korniloff as a traitor and dismissed him from his command; but none of the generals he appointed to succeed him would accept the post, and Kerensky solved the problem by appointing himself Commander-in-Chief. Alexeieff went to Mogileff and Korniloff loyally handed over his Headquarters to him. Next day he was arrested by order of Kerensky. Kaledin was also summoned to appear before a Court of Enquiry, but the Cossacks refused to let him go, and Kerensky apologised to them. Alexeieff retired in disgust at the treatment of his friends.

Downfall of Kerensky. Kerensky now appeared to be at the height of his power, but he had destroyed his most reliable prop,

and was really as much at the mercy of the Bolsheviks as Russia was at the mercy of the Germans. The Army and Navy went from bad to worse; frightful atrocities were committed by the sailors of the Baltic Fleet, and the Vryborg garrison flung its officers into the river. The German Fleet was brought up the Baltic early in October. The islands in the Gulf of Riga were seized and part of the Russian Fleet was bottled up in Moon Sound. There was trouble brewing in Petrograd. The Bolsheviks found out that it was Kerensky who had asked Korniloff to send troops to overawe them, and they became very bitter against him. There were stormy scenes in the "Council of the Republic," everybody denouncing everybody else as a traitor, after the manner of the French Revolution. The Bolshevik, Trotsky, got himself elected President of the Petrograd Soviet, and founded the "Military Revolution Committee." The troops in Petrograd thus came under his orders, but the Bolsheviks chiefly relied on the "Red Guards" armed bodies of highly paid workmen which Kerensky had himself sanctioned and recognised. For the third time Kerensky had to face a Bolshevik rising, and for the second time he took alarm. He looked around for help; he appealed to the Cossacks, but they, remembering his treatment of Korniloff, politely refused. Thereupon he shut himself up in the Winter Palace, where he had been living in some style, with a guard of Cadets and a women's "battalion of death." The Bolsheviks took up their Headquarters at the Smolny Institute. The day fixed for the *coup* was November 7th. At five in the morning Kerensky fled. The Winter Palace was stormed by the Red Guards, and the cadets and the women were massacred in cold blood. That night Petrograd was entirely in the hands of the Bolsheviks.

Lenin and Trotsky. Kerensky was not quite done with yet. He reappeared in the neighbourhood of Petrograd a few days afterwards with a motley army he had managed to collect. After a lot of speech-making on his part and a little half-hearted fighting on the part of his troops, he was defeated and deserted, and disappeared for good. The Bolshevik leaders now had it all their own way. Lenin became President of the Council, and Trotsky Foreign Secretary. One of their first acts was to ask Germany for an armistice. General Dukhonin, who happened to be Commander-in-Chief at the time, refused to obey the orders of the Bolshevik Government to suspend hostilities. He was declared a public enemy and Lenin appointed Ensign Krylenko to the chief command. Dukhonin, deserted by his troops, gave himself up at Mogileff to take his trial at Petrograd, but he was brutally murdered in the train. The Cadets at Moscow tried to resist the Bolsheviks and

terrible fighting took place in the streets, where the bodies lay unburied for days.

Collapse of Russia. Delegates from Russia, Germany and Austria met at Brest-Litovsk in December for discussing the terms of peace, on the principle of "no annexations and no indemnities." But the Germans were so completely masters of the situation that they were able to interpret these words "as they understood them." Though there was supposed to be an armistice, the fighting was by no means at an end. The Cossacks did not acknowledge the Government, and Finland and the Ukraine declared their independence. Consequently civil war broke out in many parts of Russia. The state of the country was pitiable. Nobody did any work, and thousands were dying of starvation. Factories and machinery were destroyed and all land became public property. All trade and manufactures came to a standstill, the railways ceased working, bands of deserters prowled around and pillaged at will and the big towns were at the mercy of the brutal and disorderly armed mobs which called themselves the Red Guards.

CHAPTER V.

ITALY AND THE BALKANS.

Cadorna's May Offensive. During the autumn of 1916 the heavy fighting all along the Isonzo front had resulted in the capture of many thousands of Austrian prisoners and the formation of an Italian salient between Gorizia and the Adriatic Sea. South of this salient, on the Carso, the Duke of Aosta's Army was held up by the formidable works of Hermada, and very little progress was made along the coast. Early in 1917 Cadorna started his preparations for a big offensive when the weather should prove favourable. The bombardment broke out about the middle of May along the whole Isonzo line, and the enemy was given no clue as to the probable points of attack. Two days later the Italian troops swarmed across the river at Plava and other crossings which they forced north of Gorizia, and drove the enemy back on the Bainsizza Plateau and the heights of S. Gabriele and Monte Santo, with a loss of 8,000 prisoners. To stem this attack the Austrians had to rush up troops from the south of the line. This was just what Cadorna wanted. On May 3rd, the Duke of Aosta launched his attack on the Carso, and helped by the fire of British Monitors from the Adriatic he advanced two miles, straightened the line between the salient and the sea and captured some 16,000 prisoners. But he found his new line too difficult to hold against the Austrian counter-attacks at the beginning of June, and had to give back some of the ground he had gained;

The Balkans. The position of the Allied Armies at Salonika was far from enviable, and the retention of such large forces in that pestilential area was only justified by the necessity of checking the aggressions of Bulgaria, and keeping a watchful eye over the doubtful situation in Greece. With the exception of a French push north and east of Monastir, there was little movement during the first four months of the year. Towards the end of April, General Milne assaulted the Bulgarian positions in the neighbourhood of Lake Doiran with more or less success. In May he was beginning an offensive on the Struma front when General Sarraill issued orders that all operations were to cease. The troops were withdrawn from the advance posts, and the armies settled down for the summer to fight malaria and other diseases which became prevalent in the hot weather. The condition of affairs was most unpleasant, and if it had not been for the moral effect of the presence of a large Allied Army, it might have been considered unsatisfactory.

Abdication of Constantine. Though the King of Greece had outwardly complied with the demands of the Allies he was still corresponding with the Kaiser, and the capital was a hotbed of German intrigue and the scene of noisy demonstrations against the Allies. It was evident that there could be no security while Constantine sat on the throne of Greece. The remedy was very simple—the Allies decided that Constantine must go. The delicate task of informing him of this decision and persuading him to abdicate was entrusted to an able French diplomatist, M. Jonnart, who proceeded to Athens and accomplished his mission with firmness and tact. On June 12th, Constantine, worn out with anxiety, signed his abdication in favour of his second son, Prince Alexander. There were demonstrations of sympathy on the part of his adherents as he and his Prussian Consort, Queen Sophie, left the palace; but Greece on the whole took their departure very calmly. They embarked on the Royal Yacht *Sphacteria* for Italy and ultimately found a refuge in Switzerland. A change of Ministry was now necessary. M. Zaimis, who had acted with moderation and good sense during the crisis, resigned and M. Venizelos became Prime Minister. Constantine's abdication drew a characteristic message from his imperial brother-in-law. "I have heard with righteous wrath of the abominable outrage," it ran, "but the mailed fist of Germany, with the *additional* help of Almighty God, will of a certainty restore thee to thy throne."

Bainsizza Plateau. On the east side of the Isonzo, between Tolmino and Gorizia, lies a lofty tableland known as the Bainsizza Plateau, which had been strongly fortified by the Austrians with redoubts, earthworks and concealed gun positions. In August,

General Cadorna determined to wrest this plateau from the enemy. There was the usual bombardment all along the line, and on the morning of the 19th, the Third Army began a holding battle between Gorizia and the sea to prevent General Wurm from sending help to the army on the plateau. The real attack was made by the Second Army on a twelve mile front north of Gorizia. The assaulting troops crossed the river by fourteen pontoon bridges, stormed the rugged slopes of the ridge and after four days strenuous fighting the Austrians were driven to the eastern edge. The Italians were now able to tackle Monte Santo from the north, and this formidable peak fell to them on the 24th. By the 26th an advance of four or five miles had been made, and the enemy swept off the ridge with the loss of 25,000 prisoners. The Austrians received large reinforcements under Hotzendorf and Kovess, but the Italians withstood all counter-attacks and on September 4th were able to turn their attention to Monte San Gabriele. After being taken and retaken several times, this mountain was finally held by the Italians on September 11th.

Caporetto. The Italians were not destined to keep their hard-won gains for very long. At the request of Austria, part of Von Mackensen's "mass of manoeuvre" which had dealt "knock-out" blows to Serbia and Roumania, was being moved across to deal a "knock-out" blow to Italy. The massing of German troops behind the Isonzo line was not unknown to Cadorna, but he felt confident of holding his positions and did not appeal to France or Britain for help. Nevertheless, the Isonzo line was rather thinly held north of the Bainsizza Plateau, and at one point, near Tolmino, the Austrians actually had a footing on the western bank, at the bridge-head of Santa Lucia. This was one of the three points where the blow fell on October 24th. The others were Caporetto, near Monte Nero; and Plezzo, a few miles further north. Three Austro-German Corps were launched against these points, armed with a new and deadly gas. At Santa Lucia and Plezzo the attack was stubbornly resisted, but at Caporetto, in a thick fog, the Italian troops broke and fled, and left a big gap in the line, through which the Austro-German host was soon pouring along the road to Cividale. The break-through at Caporetto caused a withdrawal at Plezzo and Tolmino. The Bainsizza Plateau was abandoned, and Gorizia was evacuated on the 27th. That same evening Cividale was occupied by the enemy, and two days later they reached Udine, the Italian advance base.

Italian Retreat to the Piave. The Second Army was now in full retreat across the Friulian Plain; it soon became a rout and 100,000 prisoners fell into the hands of the enemy. The Third Army,

meanwhile, was making an orderly fighting retirement along the coast. On the last day of October, the Tagliamento was reached. Many gallant rearguard actions were fought by the Italian cavalry to cover the crossing of the river, which was accomplished on November 1st. The Tagliamento, with its shallow stony bed, studded with little islands, did not offer a good line of resistance, and the retreat went on. The Austro-Germans were across in many places by November 4th and by the 7th the Italians had reached the next river, the Livenza. No stand was made here, and on the 9th they were crossing the Piave, with the enemy hard on their heels.

Further north the Austro-Germans had advanced from Plezzo as far as Belluno, and the Italian First Army had retreated hastily from Carnia and Cadore to avoid being cut off and encircled. The losses were very heavy. The enemy now claimed 250,000 prisoners and over 2,000 guns. The situation was extremely critical. The Piave was the last defence of Venice. If the line could be broken or turned from the north there was nothing for it but a retreat to the Adige.

The Asiago-Piave Line. General Diaz now took Cadorna's place as Commander-in-Chief of the Italian Armies, and he decided to hold the Piave Line at all costs. The Italian line had been considerably shortened by the retreat. It now ran from Lake Garda, across the Asiago Plateau to the bend of the Piave at Quero and thence along the river to the sea. The remains of the Second Army were taken out of the line altogether, and the Fourth Army took its place with the Third Army on the Piave, the First and Fifth Armies facing the Trentino. The Austro-Germans succeeded in crossing the Piave at one point, Zenson; but the greatest danger threatened from the north, where the Austrians were making a determined push down the valley of the Brenta. The Italians were gradually driven back on the Asiago Plateau, through the "Sette Comuni," and they also lost their hold on Quero. The last fringe of peaks between the Brenta and the Piave was now the scene of the most desperate struggles. A break-through by the enemy in this sector would mean the turning of the Piave Line and a retirement across the Venetian Plain. One by one these peaks were stormed by the enemy, till only one was left, Monte Grappa, the highest of them all. The Italians clung to Monte Grappa like grim death, and as it dominated the other peaks the Austrians did not gain much by their capture.

While this bitter struggle was at its height welcome help arrived from the Allies. British Divisions under General Plumer and French under General Fayolle were already in Italy, receiving an

almost delirious reception from the inhabitants of the northern towns. The British force took up a line from south of Quero to Nervesa, which included the plateau called Il Montello. The French soon afterwards were moved up on their left at the bend of the line and helped the Italians to win back Monte Tomba and other heights which had been seized by the Austrians. Before the end of December the enemy attacks slackened, and the Asiago-Piave line became more or less permanent for the winter.

CHAPTER VI.

BAGDAD AND JERUSALEM.

Recapture of Kut-el-Amara. General Maude's advance, which had been held up by the floods in December, was resumed early in January. It will be remembered that the right wing (General Cobbe) was hammering away at the obstinate lines of Sanna-i-yat, north of the Tigris, while the left wing (General Marshall) had reached the Shatt-el-Hai, south of Kut. Part of Cobbe's force cleared the bend south of the river to within five miles of Kut, while Marshall, crossing the Hai and swinging round his left towards the Tigris above Kut, soon had the Turks enclosed in a kind of half-moon. Their trenches were attacked with the greatest determination by British and Indian troops, but it was not till February 3rd that their lines were broken and they retired to the Liquorice Factory near the bank of the river. This strong post was rushed a week later by a splendid charge of the King's Own, the Buffs and Gurkhas, and by the 13th the Turks were completely enclosed in the Dahra bend. A Lancashire and two Welsh battalions cleared this bend on the 15th and 16th, and, with the exception of 2,000 prisoners, not a Turk was left on the south bank of the Tigris. Preparations were now begun for crossing the river at the southern end of the Shumran bend, and Khalil, the Turkish commander, alarmed for his communications with Bagdad, began to evacuate Kut as fast as he could. Before daylight on the 23rd the ferries were at work; by 3 p.m., in face of a heavy fire, the Norfolks and two battalions of Gurkhas were on the north bank; by 4.30 the Turkish bridge-head was seized, and our troops were pouring across.

Meanwhile General Cobbe was at last overcoming the Sanna-i-yat position, which had defied all our efforts for nearly a year. On the 17th he carried the first and second lines, but could not hold them. They were retaken on the 22nd, and held by the Seaforth's against furious counter-attacks. While Marshall was crossing the Tigris at Shumran, Cobbe carried the third, fourth and fifth lines. Next

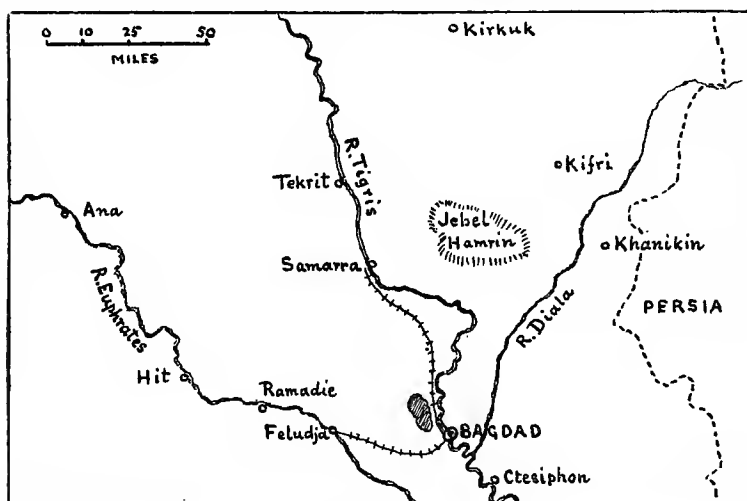
day he cleared the sixth line, and marched into Kut without further opposition.

Capture of Bagdad. All through the 24th Marshall's force was engaged in a stiff action to cut off the enemy's escape towards Bagdad, but the Turks had left strong rear-guards entrenched in the nullahs with machine guns, which stopped the advance of our cavalry. The rear guards retired during the night, and our cavalry were soon on the heels of the retreating Turks, who, after turning fiercely at bay in two or three selected positions, made off at full speed, shedding their guns and baggage behind them. The pursuit continued for two days as far as Azizieh, fifty miles from Kut, where General Maude called a halt to reorganise his forces. In three days we had captured 4,000 prisoners and 39 guns, besides numerous trench mortars and machine guns and other booty. Our gunboats, which accompanied the advance up the river, had recaptured the *Firefly*, the *Sumana* and other boats we had lost during the former campaign.

On March 5th the advance was resumed through dust-storms, and the cavalry reached Lajj, where the enemy trenches were carried by a brilliant charge of the Hussars. The Turks had decided not to fight another battle of Ctesiphon, and our forces reached the Diala, eight miles from Bagdad. Here our attempts to launch a pontoon bridge were frustrated by a withering fire from concealed machine guns. A little party of seventy Loyal North Lancashires managed to cross by a ferry, and held a small post on the further bank under the deadliest fire for 22 hours till the passage was forced at other points. The same day, the 8th, a bridge was thrown across the Tigris, and the cavalry and part of Cobbe's force crossed to the west bank and after forcing two Turkish positions, pushed on through blinding dust-storms and reached Bagdad railway station, in the south-western suburb, on the morning of the 10th. Meanwhile, Marshall had crossed the Diala, and seized the enemy's last position, the Tel Muhammed Ridge. He entered Bagdad on the 11th. The strange spectacle was witnessed of the conquerors being received with joy by the inhabitants of the captured city, who had been left at the mercy of looting Kurds and Arabs. The booty of Bagdad was immense and varied in character, not the least interesting being the guns surrendered by Townshend at Kut.

Operations Round Bagdad. The Turks, retiring northwards up the river, destroyed a dam above the city, and the waters, rushing down, flooded a large lake, which overflowed and irrigated the country for miles around. General Maude at once despatched several columns to deal with the retreating enemy.

One went westwards, and sized Feludja on the Euphrates. Two others marched northwards, one on each bank of the Tigris, and drove the Turks towards Samarra. This place, the terminus of the railway 80 miles north of Bagdad, was occupied after hard fighting on April 23rd, and the remains of the Turkish 18th corps retired on Tekrit. Another column ascended the Diala to tackle the 13th corps retreating from Persia, and on April 2nd it joined Baratoff's Cossacks at Khanikin. The 13th corps slipped away towards the Tigris, but after being routed in two engagements took refuge in the Jebel Hamrin hills. The summer was now approaching, the heat became intense, and our troops were able to have such rest as was possible in that infernal climate.



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North of Bagdad.

Ramadie. In August it was known that Von Falkenhayn was massing a large force of Turks, Germans and Austrians at Aleppo. It was not known what his purpose was, but it was quite possible he might have Bagdad in view. From Aleppo he would have the help of the railway as far as Nisibin—thence he could march to Mosul and descend the Tigris to Samarra, or he could cut across the desert to the Euphrates, and join a Turkish force entrenched in a strong position at Ramadie. In the torrid heat of July a raid had been made on Ramadie from Feludja, and the Turks were only saved from destruction by a violent sand-storm. As the

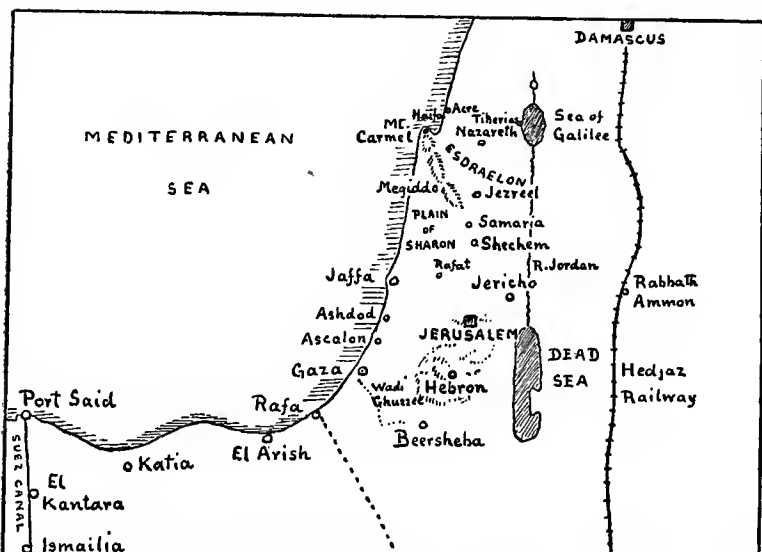
weather became more bearable General Maude planned another attack on Ramadie for the end of September. The column, under General Brooking, made a rapid night march, and by a brilliant movement outflanked and got behind the Turks, who found to their astonishment that they were completely shut in by the British troops and the river. They tried to force their way out during the night of the 28th, but were driven back with heavy loss. Indian battalions stormed Ramadie at daybreak, and up went the white flag—Ahmed Bey and his whole force surrendered.

In October General Maude cleared the Jebel Hamrin hills, and early in November, advancing from Samarra, he beat the Turks at Dur, and by a swift stroke destroyed their base at Tekrit. He was now prepared to receive Von Falkenhayn, but Von Falkenhayn did not come—he was kept too busy by Allenby in Palestine.

Death of General Maude. The change in this campaign since General Maude took command in September, 1916, was little short of marvellous, and was due to most efficient organisation. Every department of the Expeditionary Force was in perfect working order; the medical service and transport were equal to every emergency. The climate could not be improved, but everything possible was done—such as a regular supply of ice and pure water—to make life bearable during the heat of a summer unusually hot even for Mesopotamia. As for the country itself, which had suffered for centuries under the blight of the Turks, it seemed as though a wizard's wand had been waved over it. The old disused canals were opened up, and hundreds of square miles had been irrigated and were under cultivation. The parched desert was becoming once more a veritable garden of Eden, and the inhabitants of the towns had not known such security and prosperity since the days of Haroun-al-Raschid. But the genius who had worked these wonders was stricken down at the height of his success. Sir Stanley Maude, always anxious to please the people of Bagdad, attended a performance of "Hamlet" given by Arab children. He courteously accepted and drank a cup of coffee with milk. Two days later—November 18th—he died of cholera. His loss was keenly felt by British and natives alike, and at his funeral a Turkish plane flew over in spite of shell-fire, and dropped a message of sympathy. The record of his army is a testimony to his merits as a general. His work was not finished, but it was ably carried on by his successor, General Marshall, who signalled his appointment to the chief command by a victory over the Turks at Kifri.

First Battle of Gaza. At the beginning of the year Sir Archibald Murray's Desert Expedition had almost reached the boundaries of Palestine. On January 9th the advance guards drove the Turks

out of the frontier port of Rafa. They retired on Gaza and Beersheba, but General Murray's communications were not yet sufficiently advanced for a serious invasion of Palestine. By the middle of March the railway had reached Rafa, and General Murray had now to choose between an attack on Gaza or Beersheba—he wisely chose Gaza, as an advance on Beersheba would have exposed his flank to the enemy's front. A move was made on the 20th, and on the 25th the force was south of Gaza, the sea on its left and the "Wadi Ghuzzee" on its right. The Turkish line ran from the sea along the Wadi Ghuzzee towards Beersheba. Djemal Pasha was in



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Suez Canal to Damascus.

command, and he had the assistance of the German Kress von Kressenstein. The battle began long before dawn on the 26th. The mounted Anzac division crossed the Wadi Ghuzzee and made a *détour* to attack Gaza from the north. The Imperial Mounted Division and Camel Corps also crossed the Wadi and made a wider *détour* to ward off attacks from the east. The attack from the south was entrusted to three Territorial divisions which had seen service at Suvla Bay. A dense fog came on soon after sunrise and delayed the advance for two hours. The key to the position was a prominent height called Ali Muntar, the hill to which Samson

carried off the gates of Gaza. After hard fighting Ali Muntar was carried by the 53rd Division, and the 54th occupied the ridges on the right. Meanwhile the Anzacs had forced their way through the thick cactus hedges north of Gaza and towards evening were fighting in the streets of the town. Gaza was surrounded, and two more hours of daylight would have given us the town and the 7,000 Turks inside it. But those two hours had been lost by the early morning fog, and as our positions at nightfall were too precarious to hold, a withdrawal had to be made. The battle was resumed next morning, and our patrols occupied Ali Muntar, but the enemy had received reinforcements, there was no water for man or beast, and again we had to retire. The whole force took up a position on the sandhills by the sea.

Second Battle of Gaza. In the next three weeks the railway was brought right up to the front, and a better provision made for a supply of water, which came all the way from Egypt! Another division arrived, but the Turks also received fresh divisions, and greatly strengthened their defences. The second battle of Gaza was fought on April 17th. Though our troops strove gallantly all day in the blazing heat very little impression was made on the enemy positions—this time we could not even take Ali Muntar. At nightfall General Murray gave orders that the ground should be held and the attack renewed at daybreak, but Generals Dobell and Chetwode urged the large number of casualties, the weariness of the troops and the scanty water supply. General Murray reluctantly yielded to their representations, and gave up all idea of a further attempt. Soon after, Sir Philip Chetwode took over the command of the Eastern Force from General Dobell, who was suffering from sunstroke, and General Chauvel became commander of the Desert Column.

Beersheba and Jaffa. The failure at Gaza must have been a bitter disappointment to Sir Archibald Murray after his success in overcoming all the engineering and transport difficulties of his journey through the desert. He was recalled to England, and in his stead came Sir Edmund Allenby, a commander who had led with the greatest ability on the western front from Mons to Arras. The summer was spent in resting the troops and preparing for a further advance. Our lines were continually under enemy aeroplane observation, and General Allenby took advantage of this to put the Turks off his real objective by making demonstrations against Gaza. On October 31st a sudden swoop was made on Beersheba, and the town was rushed by the Australians, who captured 2,000 prisoners and 15 guns. An attack was then launched on Gaza; Umbrella Hill, between Gaza and the sea, was

stormed by the 52nd Division on the night of November 1st. Ali Muntar was also occupied and our guns kept up a heavy bombardment for several days. On the 7th the Turks evacuated the town and retreated northwards along the coast, with great loss of prisoners and material. We pursued them through the "country of the Philistines" and captured those once powerful cities of Ascalon and Ashdod, now mere villages. The last stand of the enemy in front of Jaffa was scattered by a charge of cavalry, and the town was entered by Australian mounted troops on November 16th. Three days before this the Jaffa-Jerusalem railway had been cut at the junction with the Beersheba-Damascus line. Our Yeomanry did splendid work in these operations; Captain Neil Primrose, M.P., and many other gallant Yeomen gave their lives. London, Irish and Welsh infantry troops shared the honours with the 52nd (Lowland) Division, which fought its way 69 miles in nine days.

Jerusalem. The advance of our right from Beersheba through the hill-country of Judaea was more difficult and naturally slower. Good progress was made at the beginning of December, and on the 7th we occupied Hebron, celebrated for the jealously guarded mosque which covers the burial place of the Patriarchs. Meanwhile our left was working round from Jaffa, and had almost reached Jerusalem on the north. Happily the Holy City was not fated to add another sanguinary struggle to its stormy history. On December 9th it was peacefully surrendered, and two days later General Allenby made a solemn entry on foot by the Jaffa Gate, accompanied by representatives of the Allied Powers. He was well received by the inhabitants, who knew that they had nothing to fear from British justice. On Mount Zion, at the foot of the Tower of David, a proclamation was read in four languages, promising that the rights and religion of the people should be respected. The Holy Places were to be protected, and the famous Mosque of Omar was placed under a guard of Indian Mohammedan troops. Jerusalem thus came into the hands of the Christians once more for the first time since the days of Richard Coeur de Lion. This time the ringing of church bells was justified not only by a great victory over the enemy, but by the peculiar significance of the occasion.

Conquest of German East Africa. Before the end of 1916, General Smuts had driven the Germans out of British East Africa, invaded German East Africa, cut the Central Railway and taken the capital, Dar-es-Salam and the ports of Kilwa and Lindi. In January 1917, General Smuts gave up his command, and General Hoskins carried on till May, when he was succeeded by General Van der Venter. Von Lettow was on the line of

the Rufiji River, and there were other detachments not far inland from Kilwa and Lindi. There was also a large German force in the interior at Mahenge. Van der Venter made a move early in June from Kilwa, included in his force being a Nigerian column under General Cunliffe. Von Lettow retired from the Rufiji River, and in October, Van der Venter's columns had hemmed him in the south-east corner of German East Africa. General Northey advanced from his Headquarters at Ubena, north of Lake Nyassa, and on September 8th took Mponda, south of Mahenge. A Belgian column was advancing on Mahenge from the north, and the German force there under Colonel Tafel hurriedly left the place and made a clever retreat in a south-easterly direction with the idea of joining Von Lettow. Tafel came across a small column under General Shorthose, which had crossed the Rovuma River from Rhodesia, and was headed off to the east; instead of joining Von Lettow he was met by Van der Venter and had to surrender. Von Lettow was now entrapped, and had to escape by crossing the Rovuma River into Portuguese East Africa. Before the end of the year German East Africa was cleared of the Germans, but the wily Von Lettow was still at large and likely to cause us much trouble.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WAR AT SEA.

Unlimited Submarine Campaign. There was no big sea-fight in 1917. The Germans kept their battleships and cruisers well within their own mine-fields, and limited their activities to destroyer raids and submarine "warfare" as they called it, though "piracy" would be really too mild a term for it. In January their High Command gave out that a "ruthless" submarine campaign would open on February 1st, from which date all their pledges and promises, and all the conventions of sea-warfare were flung to the winds. Henceforth any ship, allied or neutral, was to be sunk at sight by the apostles of Kultur. The United States were graciously allowed to send one ship a week to Falmouth, under very humiliating conditions, which the Americans did not accept. They sent three "test" ships across the Atlantic in the ordinary way, unadorned by the red and white stripes imposed by the conditions. They all three reached their destination safely before the end of February without sighting a submarine. It cannot be denied, however, that the U boats met with a certain amount of success. In February the total tonnage destroyed, allied and neutral, was close on half a million. In one week (in April) fifty-eight ships of over 1,600 tons were sunk; but they could not keep it up against the measures

employed by the Navy for trapping the U boats, and the weekly losses settled down to an average of fourteen or fifteen. In the week ending November 11th, only one large ship was sunk. The most notorious cases of attacks on Hospital ships were the *Asturias* sunk in the Bristol Channel on March 20th, the *Gloucester Castle* (English Channel, April 13th) and the *Dover Castle* (Mediterranean, May 26th). This ruthlessness quite failed to produce the moral effect expected by the Germans. The Mercantile Marine "stuck it" like heroes. No sooner was a "torpedoed" sailor landed in port, perhaps after several hours in the cold water, than he sought another ship, and some were torpedoed as many as six or seven times in the course of the year. The only effect was the increased indignation and resentment aroused against the enemy, and no sympathy could be felt for the U boats which were trapped by the ice in the Sound, or for the notorious Commander Schneider when he was washed overboard and drowned.

Commerce Raiders. Early in the year two German commerce-raiders were at work on the surface of the ocean. They took enormous risks, and did their business in a more sporting manner than the submarines. One was the disguised cruiser *Mæwe*, which for the second time raided the Atlantic and in the course of four months made a bag of twenty seven ships. Her largest victim was the White Star liner *Georgic* (10,000 tons). She returned safely to port about the end of March. The other was the *Seeadler*, a large Clyde-built sailing ship with an auxiliary motor engine, captured from America. She operated between Iceland and Brazil. Between January 9th and March 11th, she accounted for eleven ships. Her career was not brought to a close till August, when, after many adventures, she ran aground on Lord Howe Island and was abandoned by her crew.

Destroyers. From their base at Zeebrugge the Germans were in the habit of sending out destroyers for raids in the North Sea and several sharp actions took place. The first was on the night of January 22nd off the Dutch coast, in very wintry weather. In this action the German flagship got badly knocked about. Her bridge was blown away by the first shot fired at her, and the commander of the flotilla was killed. She managed to reach the Dutch port of Ymuiden, having lost half her crew of 160 and with eight corpses frozen so hard to her deck that axes had to be used to detach them. One very dark night in April five destroyers dashed out of Zeebrugge for a raid on Dover and Calais. After firing some shells at random, they were encountered by the British Destroyers *Broke* and *Swift*. A fierce engagement took place at very close quarters. One German boat was boarded, and after five minutes'

hand to hand fighting, was destroyed; another was sunk, and a third put out of action. In May and June, Commodore Tyrwhitt's squadron sighted German flotillas out for a raid and on each occasion chased them back to Zeebrugge, scoring repeated hits and sinking the S.20. Now and then the enemy got across to the East Coast for a few minutes' frightfulness. On January 5th a small vessel appeared off the "fortified" port of Southwold and after a display of fireworks, dropped a few shells in some fields. On February 25th destroyers bombarded the coast of Kent and killed a woman and two children in a little cottage between Margate and Broadstairs. Ramsgate was shelled from the sea three times in March, and on September 4th a submarine popped up off Scarborough and fired thirty rounds at the visitors on the promenade. By such exploits did the Kaiser keep up the spirit of adventure in his navy and the spirits of his people at home.

Attacks on Convoys. On October 20th, a convoy of twelve Scandinavian ships, escorted by the destroyers *Mary Rose* and *Strongbow* was attacked between Norway and the Shetland Islands by two fast German cruisers. The two destroyers put up a gallant fight, but were out-weighted by the heavier guns of the cruisers and sunk. Three of the merchant ships made their escape, but the other nine were sunk by the gunfire from the cruisers, which then made off home without attempting to rescue the drowning crews and passengers. A few were saved by British patrol boats which arrived on the scene soon afterwards. A similar incident occurred on December 12th, when a convoy of six ships, escorted by the destroyers *Pellew* and *Partridge*, was attacked by four German destroyers. The *Partridge* was badly hit, blew up and sank, the *Pellew's* engines were knocked out of action and the merchant ships were then sunk by gunfire.

Mutiny in the German Fleet. In August there was a mutiny in the German Fleet at Wilhelmshaven. Various reasons were given, such as scarcity of food, fear of submarine service and the influence of the Russian revolution. But the most probable cause was the prolonged inactivity of the German big ships. It broke out on four battleships; the captain of one, the *Westfalen*, was thrown overboard and drowned. The crews then went ashore, and when the Marines refused to arrest them a regiment of soldiers took on the job and the mutineers surrendered. The cruiser *Nurnberg* also mutinied and made off towards Norway, but was held up and brought back by a destroyer flotilla. The Kaiser ordered one out of every seven of the mutineers to be shot, but as this would have made trouble in the Reichstag, only three men were shot and others sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. In

October the German big ships were able to get some exercise in the Baltic. A fleet of "Koenigs," "Kaisers" and cruisers drove the Russians out of the Gulf of Riga, captured the outlying islands and bottled up the Russian fleet in Moon Sound.

Liveliness in the Adriatic. The British and French, assisted by Japanese flotillas, had their work cut out to protect our large traffic in the Mediterranean from submarine attack, but in spite of their vigilance, several transports were torpedoed. British Monitors did useful work in the Adriatic, helping the Italian advance on the coast in the summer, and delaying the enemy during the November retreat. One Monitor, the *Picton*, destroyed three bridges on the Piave, at a range of 18,000 yards, scoring five direct hits out of seven rounds fired. The Austrian ships rarely ventured out, but the Italians made frequent raids across to Trieste and Pola and did much damage to the docks and shipping, both from the sea and the air. On one occasion (May 15th) some Austrian cruisers came out to raid the Allied drifter line, and sank fourteen British drifters. Skipper Watt, of the *Gowan Lea*, won the Victoria Cross for his gallantry in this unequal fight. On being hailed to surrender by an Austrian cruiser at a hundred yards range, he gave the order for three cheers and a fight to a finish. Though his gun was smashed by a shot from the cruiser he kept his end up till the cruiser sheered off, and was able to render assistance to another drifter which had been badly damaged. The Austrian cruisers were attacked by the *Dartmouth* and *Bristol* and chased to Cattaro, where they were bombed and badly hit by Italian airmen.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUMMARY. 1917.

The Year's Fighting. The fighting in France and Flanders in 1917 was all in favour of the Allies, with the exception of the unfortunate incidents at Nieuport and Gonnelleu. We began with a big advance, almost a walk-over, to the Hindenburg Line, which regained about a thousand square miles of territory from the Germans. The Battles of Arras, Ypres, the Chemin des Dames, Verdun and Cambrai all gained ground. But Sir Douglas Haig's battles must not be judged merely by the local success achieved. Arras was begun and prolonged at the express request of General Nivelle, and was of the greatest assistance to his offensive on the Aisne. The struggle in the mud for the Passchendaele Ridge caused no small relief to Pétain at Verdun and Malmaison. The thrust at Cambrai was a tonic for our Italian allies hard pressed on the Piave. In Asia, Generals Maude and Allenby had wrested the

one-time centre of Islam and the Holy City of Christendom from the hands of the Turk. Germany had lost her last, and incidentally her largest and best colony in Africa. But in spite of these victories the prospects of the Allies were anything but bright at the end of the year. This was due to the collapse of Russia, which had released German armies for the Western Front and made it possible for Austria to invade Italy.

Russia. We had formed high hopes of Russia in the early days of the war, which were not fulfilled; but even after the retreat from Warsaw large German and Austrian armies were detained on the Eastern Front. It may seem ungrateful to blame the Russians, who had fought so well and suffered so severely, for letting us down so badly; but let us down they did. Their revolution was a failure, and led to the worst excesses of a people unaccustomed to freedom. Nothing could have saved Russia but a military dictatorship, and Alexeieff was the man. Kerensky evidently thought that Korniloff was aiming at the dictatorship. Indeed, there had been some talk of it at Mogileff, but Korniloff was quite willing to serve as "Master of the Horse" to Alexeieff. He had a poor opinion of Kerensky, and Kerensky knew it. Their quarrel settled the fate of Russia; it divided the civil and the military power, and paved the way for Lenin and Trotsky and that outbreak of Bolshevism which swept away Russia's last chance of resistance.

The United States of America. There was a brighter side to the Allies' picture. The great American Nation, irritated beyond measure by the U boat campaign, and not slightly annoyed by the discovery of German plots in Mexico, declared war on April 6th. All the resources of the richest nation in the world were at once devoted to the destruction of the Hohenzollerns. Provision was made for raising an army of ten million men, and a large increase in the navy. Vast training camps and new shipyards sprang up as if by magic. Hundreds of millions of dollars were voted for guns, munitions and aeroplanes. Almost immediately a fleet of destroyers, under Admiral Sims, was sent across the Atlantic to hunt the U boats. General Pershing and the advance guard of troops came over in June, and the units which marched through London had a great welcome from the crowd. By October American troops were in the trenches on the Lorraine front. The German papers affected to make light of America's entry into the war. The transports, they said, would all be torpedoed on the way, and in any case Hindenburg would deal his knock-out blow to the Allies before the Americans could make any difference. Like most German prophecies, this did not come true. The protection of the convoys was so efficient that not a single transport was torpedoed, and before the end of the year 150,000 men had been landed in Europe.

Gotha Raids. The Zeppelin menace had been mastered by the end of 1916; in 1917 airships were used for an occasional dash to the North-East coast, but only once did they venture near London. The Germans changed their tactics and tried daylight raids with the powerful bombing planes known as Gothas. The first aeroplane raid on a big scale took place on the afternoon of May 25th, when a number of enemy machines flew over Folkestone and dealt havoc in the crowded streets. There were 76 killed and 176 wounded in this raid. This was followed by a very destructive raid on London on June 13th, at the busiest hour of the morning, by over twenty Gothas, escorted by light fighting planes. The casualties were 140 killed and 432 injured, including a number of children in a school which was struck by two bombs. A similar raid on July 7th caused the death of 43 persons and injuries to 195. There were big daylight raids on Harwich, Southend and Kent in July and August. In September the moon, which had been our greatest friend in the time of the Zeppelins, became extremely unpopular. On September 3rd, in the bright moonlight, bombs were dropped on Chatham. One fell on the Naval Barracks and caused over one hundred casualties. The next night, at the end of a perfect day, the buzz of the Gothas was heard over London, and bombs were dropped near Charing Cross and Paddington Stations. A terrific thunderstorm the following night was a welcome relief. Scarcely had the next moon reached her first quarter than the raids began again. There were no less than six between September 24th and 30th. Our barrage had been considerably strengthened in the meantime, and airmen went up to tackle the invaders. The Gothas found great difficulty in getting over London. Some of them were very persistent, but others were put to flight and two or three were brought down. The sound of the guns and bombs could be heard twenty miles away. The casualties on these six occasions were 42 killed and 199 injured. There was no raid on the 27th as the Gothas, drawn up in line ready to start, were bombed by the R.N.A.S. at their aerodrome in Belgium. They tried three more raids before the end of the year; on October 30th, December 6th and December 18th.

Zeppelin Fiasco. One dark moonless night (it was October 19th) about 11.30 p.m. London was startled by three terrific bangs. They were bombs from a Zeppelin which was silently hovering over the city. Eleven Zeppelins are said to have crossed the coast, but only one reached London. Some of them never got home again. They apparently lost their bearings in the fog, and next morning were drifting helplessly over France. L.44 was destroyed by anti-aircraft guns near Lunéville. Two came down near Grenoble

and were set on fire by their crews. Another descended at Bourbon-les-Bains. A French farmer, out betimes to shoot the early bird, came on the scene just as the crew were about to destroy their airship. He covered them with his gun and they surrendered to him. Thanks to this sportsman the great gas-bag was captured intact. A fifth Zeppelin was seen drifting out to sea near Toulon !

Fighting in the Air. The importance, the absolute necessity, of maintaining our supremacy in the air was more apparent than ever in 1917. In 1916 the Fokker menace had been overcome, chiefly by the productions of private firms, such as the De Havilland, the Martinside and the Sopwith machines. We began the Battle of the Somme with an undisputed "ascendancy," but as the battle went on the German Spads and Halberstadts, capable of climbing to a height of 20,000 feet began to assert themselves. In like manner we began the Battles of Arras and "Third Ypres" by clearing the air and establishing an overwhelming ascendancy ; but this could not be maintained against the large squadrons of powerful planes the Germans massed against us. All through 1917 there was a constant call for improved machines and skilful and daring men to fly and fight them. There was no lack of the latter. It might seem almost impossible for one particular man to become a superman among supermen ; but this was accomplished by Captain Albert Ball. While yet a youth of nineteen he had destroyed over thirty enemy planes and won the M.C. and D.S.O. (with bars). In June, 1917, he was awarded the V.C. for a series of almost incredible exploits between April 26th and May 6th, in which he destroyed eleven planes and drove several others down out of control. But at last a day came when this hero of a hundred fights "failed to return from a patrol." Captain Bishop and Captain McCudden also added the V.C. to their other decorations. The latter had twice destroyed four enemy two-seaters on the same day ; on the second occasion within the space of an hour and a half. The most famous German flyer of the year was Baron Von Richthofen. He was the leader of a large flight of Albatros planes which visited various spots on the line and became known as the "travelling circus." The German Gothas were not the only big bombing planes. We had our Handley-Pages, the French their Bréguets and Caudrons and the Italians their huge Caproni tri-planes. Hundreds of tons of bombs were dumped on the enemy bases in Belgium, on Metz and Treves and the manufacturing towns on the Rhine. In October an Italian airman, Captain Laureati, flew from Turin to London without a stop.

Commanders and Statesmen. There was no change in our High Command during 1917. The Army had every confidence in

Sir Douglas Haig and the Navy in Sir David Beatty. General Pétain succeeded General Nivelle as French Generalissimo in May, and General Foch became Chief of the Staff at Paris. In November the Italian retreat led to the formation of the "Allied War Council" at Versailles, for securing complete combination and unity on the Western Front. The military representatives were Sir H. Wilson (Britain), General Foch (France) and General Cadorna (Italy). German strategy was still directed by Hindenburg and Ludendorff. The commanders on the Western Front were Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria (north), the Crown Prince (centre) and the Duke of Württemberg (from Verdun to Switzerland). England had as Prime Minister that rare combination, a man of words and action. Mr. Lloyd George did not please everybody, but he tackled every problem with energy, decision and pluck. In November M. Clemenceau became Prime Minister of France. "The Tiger," as he was called, was a much older man than Mr. Lloyd George, but he had the same energy and enthusiasm, and the gift of imparting his cheerful confidence to the army and the people. The German Chancellor, Bethmann-Holweg, resigned in the summer and a nonentity named Dr. Michaelis was appointed. He fell in November and Count Hertling, an elderly Bavarian, became Chancellor.

National Service and Food Problems. No one worked harder for their country than our King and Queen, who, with the Princes and Princesses of the Royal House, set a splendid example of "National Service." One of Mr. Lloyd George's first schemes was to organise the war work of the country. For this purpose a National Service Department was created, with Mr. Nevile Chamberlain as Director; but he clashed with the Director of Recruiting, and the expenses entailed were out of all proportion to the number of persons who were found jobs. The scheme was revised later in the year and the offices of Minister of National Service and Director of Recruiting combined in Sir Auckland Geddes, brother of Sir Eric Geddes, First Lord of the Admiralty. The food problem became serious early in the year. This was due to a variety of causes, but chiefly to a lack of transport and the disturbed war conditions all over the world. Over half of our merchant service was engaged in transporting troops, munitions and supplies for the Allies and the submarine losses reduced the number of ships available for carrying food. There was a shortage of flour, potatoes and sugar. Lord Devonport was appointed Food Controller, and on his retirement Lord Rhondda accepted the thankless post. Various schemes and restrictions were tried to ensure economy, but compulsory "rations" were bound to come. We had laughed at the German bread tickets and beer tickets, but we might have

taken a leaf out of their book a bit earlier. The shortage of food and other commodities in Germany and Austria was making itself felt very severely, but it was relieved to some extent by supplies from Roumania and Russia. The requirements of the armies had to be satisfied first, and the civilian population found themselves not only in want of food, but of such things as boots and other wearing apparel; substitutes had to be invented and their paper clothes were a fertile theme for the humorists of our comic papers. However, the impression prevalent in England that the Germans could not last out another winter proved to be unfounded, and the prophets who rashly predicted that the war would end (in our favour) by Christmas were sadly out of their reckoning. Our qualified success in the long battle on the Passchendaele Ridges had been gained at the cost of nearly a quarter of a million casualties, and crippled our armies in the field for some time to come. On the other hand the new tactics of Von Hutier in Russia, repeated on a large scale by Otto Von Below in Italy and on a small scale by Von Marwitz at Gonnelleu, had restored the spirit of the offensive to the German armies, and the boasting of their Press and the promises of their High Command had renewed, for a time, the staying-power of the German people. In England the general opinion was that we should be able to hold our line against the threatened offensive, and few people anticipated the fiery ordeal of the coming spring.

PART V.—1918.

CHAPTER I.

THE GREAT GERMAN OFFENSIVE. AMIENS AND ARMENTIERES.

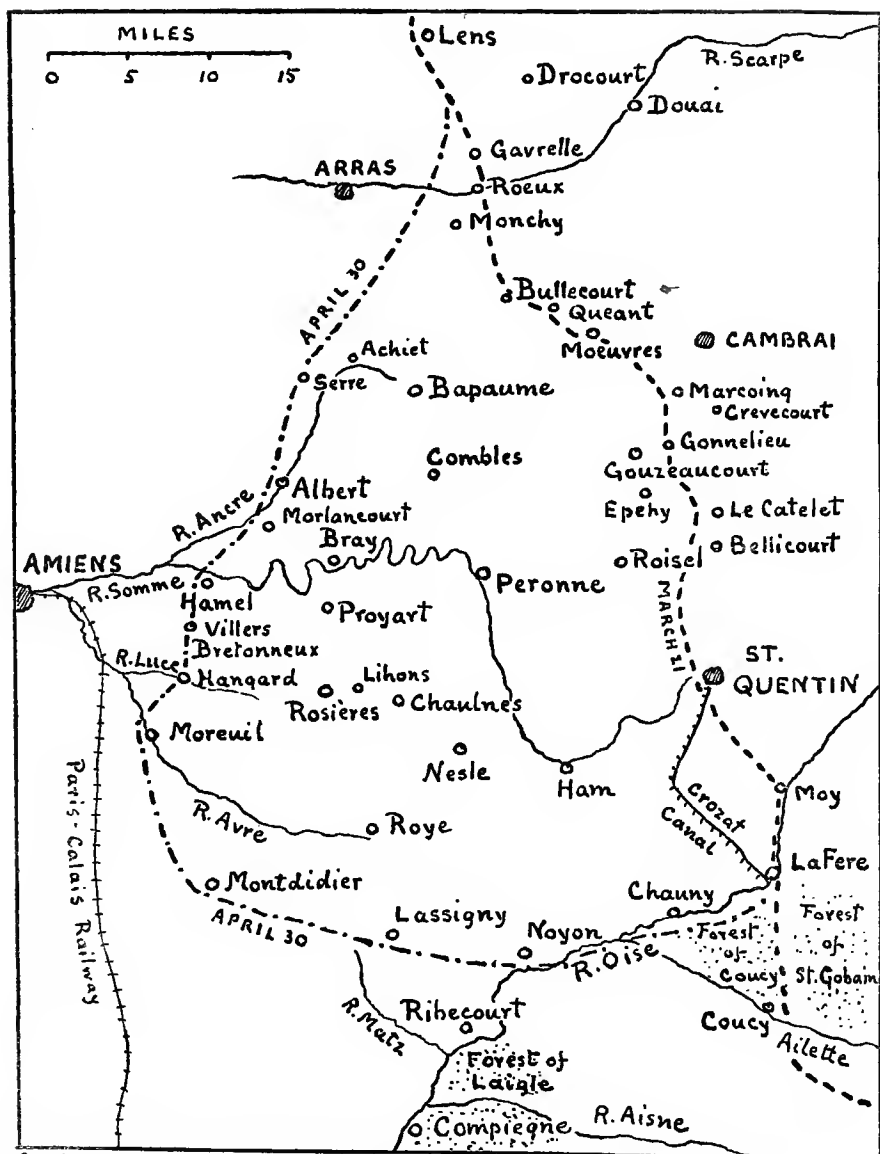
The Lull Before the Storm. The Western Front was very quiet during January and February. The Germans were preparing for their Big Offensive, and the Allies were preparing to resist it. They knew it was coming, but they did not know where. Some said Verdun, others Soissons ; so the whole line had to be held in force, and no strong body of reserves could be kept in support at any particular spot. There were pressing reasons for a crushing and final effort on the part of the enemy. Russia had been laid waste and a big wedge driven into Italy ; but the German people were getting restive under the strain of the war, and Hindenburg had to promise them a crowning victory—a “ knock-out ” blow on the Western Front before the Americans could make their power felt on a large scale. Hindenburg and Ludendorff staked everything on this offensive and left no stone unturned to ensure its success. Half a million men and thousands of guns were brought from Russia and Italy, and Stosstruppen were rehearsed behind the lines with new weapons in new methods of attack.

As February passed and March was passing and nothing happened, many began to think that the threatened offensive was a gigantic bluff and would never come off. Not so Sir Douglas Haig. He had a shrewd suspicion that it would be launched against the British Lines, and he made his preparations accordingly. He had a difficult task. His divisions were reduced and exhausted by the fighting of 1917, and he had no such accession of war-trained reserves as the enemy were now able to draw upon. He had recently taken over 28 miles from the French between St. Quentin and La Fère, making the British line 125 miles in length. A good general always considers the possibility of a retirement, and Sir Douglas Haig now had to make up his mind which part of his front must be held at all costs, and where ground could be yielded to the enemy with least disastrous results. He decided that there could be no retirement north of Arras, except perhaps on the River Lys, and that if the Germans gained any ground at all, it should be the area they devastated themselves when they retreated to the Hindenburg Line. This explains why General Gough was occupying such a long line with insufficient forces to hold it.

Strength of the Armies. We must now compare the strength

of the armies facing each other from Arras to the Oise. In the early days of the war we could talk about battalions and brigades, but the armies now had become so huge that we have to take a division as a unit. The full strength of a division is about 15,000 men, but the British divisions had been reduced from 13 to 10 battalions; and as these were very rarely at full strength, a division could not muster anything like 10,000 bayonets. A little simple arithmetic, for which we have the authority of Sir Douglas Haig's despatch, will give us an idea of the German superiority in numbers. At the beginning of March the Germans had 192 divisions on the Western Front; 46 fresh ones since October. The British Army from Ypres to the Oise numbered 58 divisions. From Arras to Gouzeaucourt, a distance of 27 miles, the line was held by General Byng's Third Army. He had eight divisions in line and seven in reserve. From Gouzeaucourt to La Fère was General Gough's Fifth Army. He had to hold 42 miles with eleven divisions in line and three infantry and three cavalry divisions in reserve. His right wing lay along the Marshes of the Oise, which were usually impassable in March, and were very lightly held. Opposite Byng was the army of General Otto Von Below, which had made the thrust into Italy a few months previously. Opposite Gough were the armies of Von Marwitz and Von Hutier. The latter belonged to the Crown Prince's Army Group, and had lately come from Russia. The Germans were in such force that they were able to attack on the first day with 64 divisions and they had many more in support. Between Gouzeaucourt and Moy Gough had no less than forty divisions against him. Behind our front line three defensive belts had been constructed. It was confidently expected that the enemy would be held in this "battle zone." But in case of emergency a strong "bridgehead" position was being prepared to cover Peronne and the crossings of the Somme. Unfortunately this was not completed when the battle began.

The Storm Bursts—March 21st. At last the long-expected moment arrived. After a short but very deadly bombardment, the attack was launched before dawn on March 21st on a front of 54 miles from the Sensée to the Oise. As usual, the enemy was favoured by the weather. There was a thick mist, and the marshes of the Oise were almost dry. The German hosts came on in close order, preceded by clouds of gas and their new tanks, clumsy arrangements squirting out liquid fire. They were on our advanced artillery almost without warning; heroic stands were made by our batteries, which wrought havoc on the dense columns at point blank range. Our line was pierced at several points west of St. Quentin and there was fierce fighting in our first battle position



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St. Quentin to Amiens.

Ronssoy was captured at mid-day, and north of La Fère the enemy crossed the Oise and turned our right on the marshes. Many units, surrounded in isolated bastions, fought their way back with great bravery. As evening came on, Gough decided to retire behind the Crozat Canal, and many gallant acts were performed in destroying the bridges under a murderous fire. Farther north Byng had crossed the Canal du Nord and was fighting in the "battle zone" at certain points. The pressure was so great that he had to commence a withdrawal from the Flesquières Salient, opposite Cambrai, and also to retire his right to keep in touch with the Fifth Army. A battalion of the Seaforths was almost wiped out at Lagnicourt in covering the retirement of the famous 51st Division.

The Great Retreat. As yet there was no break through the "battle zone," but the Fifth Army was outnumbered by three to one, and was in a very critical position. On the second day the enemy pushed on, column after column, in spite of heavy losses, and when one division was exhausted another came through to take its place. Twice they got across the Crozat Canal and twice were driven back. The reserve divisions of the Fifth Army had already been flung into the battle and there were no reinforcements available. Roisel and Epehy had to be abandoned; the third battle-zone was pierced and Gough had no alternative but to fall back on the Somme bridgehead. The Third Army held its own all day, but the right had to retire towards evening to keep in touch.

Fighting went on all night, and on the morning of the third day there was a gap of eight miles between the two armies at Mory. Von Marwitz made a furious thrust to drive a wedge between them, but when Mory was cut off and surrounded it was held by a battalion of Leicesters till relieved by a Scottish brigade. Von Hutier succeeded in crossing the Crozat Canal, and as reports were received from our airmen that "the German front as far back as Mont D'Origny was packed with advancing troops," General Gough had to reconsider his decision of holding the bridgehead. He began a retirement across the Somme, destroying the bridges behind him. Peronne and Ham were captured that evening, and so ended the third day of the battle.

Early next morning the Germans were crossing the Somme. Bapaume gave them a lot of trouble and was not taken till three Army Corps had been concentrated on it. We had to abandon Combles and retire across the old Somme battlefields, losing in one day all the ground we had gained by four months' hard fighting in the autumn of 1916.

The retreat was covered by our cavalry with the greatest devotion and gallantry. That night there was a big gap between

our two armies at Serre, and the situation of the Fifth Army from Serre to the Oise (near Noyon) was extremely critical.

On the 25th all our forces north of the Somme came under the command of the Third Army, and the gap at Serre was filled up by non-combatants rushed up from the back area. A retirement was made on the Ancre and a line taken up from Albert to Bray on the Somme which was expected to be the permanent line of defence. South of the Somme there were no British reserves. A force was collected by General Grant, Chief Engineer of the Fifth Army, composed of all the non-combatants and odd-job men available, and this was our last line of defence behind Gough's thinned and exhausted divisions. As General Grant could not be spared from his special duties, this force came under the command of General Carey, and as it turned out, it saved the situation.

Next day (26th) the enemy was pressing in overwhelming force west of Roye and Nesle, and a line was taken from Rosières to Proyart to link up with the Third Army at Bray on the Somme. But unfortunately the Albert—Bray position had been abandoned owing to a mistake on the part of the local commander, who thought it was only a temporary resting-place, and the left flank of the Fifth Army was uncovered for a space of five miles. This dangerous spot on the Somme was held by 350 men with Lewis guns !

On the 27th the Fifth Army had to withdraw from the Rosières—Proyart line. Albert and Montdidier were captured by the enemy and the menace to Amiens became very serious. North of the Somme Byng had been reinforced, but south of the Somme there was practically nothing to bar the way but Carey's force.

What the French Did. It may be asked, "What were the French doing? Did they come to our assistance?" Yes, they did. The French were splendid. On the second day of the battle three fresh French divisions were hurried across the Oise to help our right wing hard-pressed on the dry marshes. They took up a line behind the Crozat Canal and covered the retreat all through the 23rd. With some isolated British regiments they fell back on Chauny and Noyon to protect the line of the Oise. General Fayolle arrived that evening with all the reinforcements he could collect. Chauny fell to the enemy on the 24th, and the French took up a line between Noyon and Roye, fighting side by side with the British divisions on the right of the Fifth Army. Next day the enemy tried to break through to Compiègne, but dismounted French cavalry, rushed up to stop the gap between Noyon and Lassigny, offered such a gallant resistance that the attack proved futile.

On March 26th the British and French Governments came to the wise decision that the direction of strategy and control of reserves

on the Western Front ought to be in the hands of one man. It was only natural that a French general should be chosen, and that he should be the ablest French strategist. Hence the appointment of General Foch to the supreme command was hailed with unqualified approval by England and France. By the 27th the French had established a firm line along the Divette from Noyon to Montdidier, covering Lassigny, which resisted all further attempts of the enemy to force their new salient southwards in the direction of Compiègne and Paris.

The Struggle for Arras and Amiens. After a week's retreating and ceaseless fighting our armies were exhausted, but by no means *hors de combat*. Byng's left wing had stood firm east of Arras and formed a pivot for the retirement of his centre and right to the line of the Ancre. His right (originally the left wing of Gough's Army) was now west of Albert and rested on the Somme ten miles west of Bray. South of the Somme, from Hamel to Marcelcave there was nothing but Carey's force and a division of cavalry to stop a break through to Amiens. Thence, in almost a straight line to Montdidier, were the battered remains of the Fifth Army mixed with some French units. The southern sector of the big bulge, from Montdidier to Noyon was in the keeping of the French. General Gough and his staff, worn out with seven sleepless nights and seven restless days, were relieved by General Rawlinson and the staff of the Fourth Army, and entrusted with the construction of a new line of defence behind the battle front. However, the Germans had almost, if not quite, reached the limits of their advance, though they did not know it at the time. They quite intended to take Arras and Amiens and wipe out our armies or separate them from the French.

On the 28th the grand assault was made on Arras, north and south of the Scarpe. The enemy attacked with the greatest determination and courage. They came on "shoulder to shoulder in six lines," says Sir Douglas Haig, "and on the whole front our machine-guns obtained most favourable targets." They cut their way through our wire by hand and their impetus carried them through gaps in our outpost line. But our artillery did great execution at point-blank range and our machine-guns raked their flanks; they were stopped and thrown back with heavy loss. "A second attack met with the same reception and shared the same fate."

On the same day the Germans made a push towards Amiens between the Avre and the Luce, and on the 30th we had to retire from Hamel and Morlancourt. They were now within twelve miles of Amiens. It must be admitted that their packed columns, con-

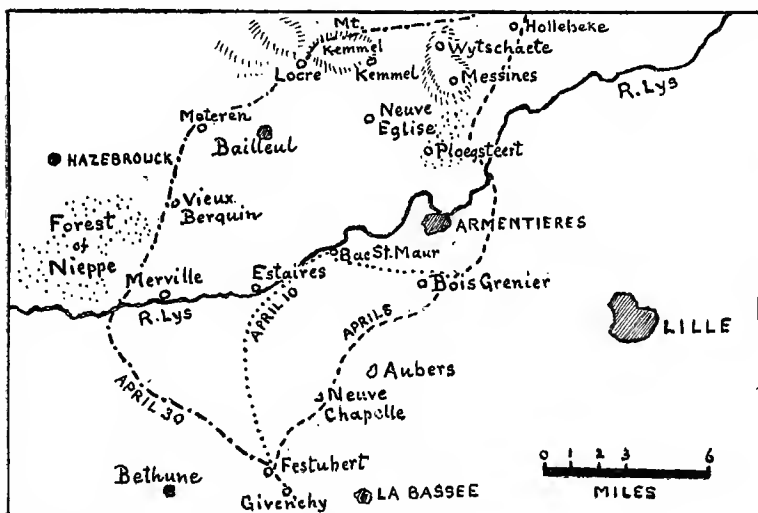
fidant in their superior numbers and the promise of victory, had so far advanced to the attack with reckless bravery and a certain measure of success. It was possible in the first few days for their command to pour fresh divisions into the battle to relieve the waste, but by now even the Germans were getting exhausted, and the attacks, though still formidable, became more local.

The next push came on April 4th, but we stuck to the vital positions of Villers-Bretonneux and Hangard. Fifteen German divisions were launched against the French. They crossed the Avre at Moreuil and got within seven miles of Amiens. The civil population had already evacuated the city, which was now subject to daily bombardments.

"Big Bertha." Paris had suffered severely during the winter from moonlight Gotha raids, and now to the terror by night was added the terror by day. Soon after the opening of the German offensive it was reported that 9 in. shells were dropping in Paris at intervals of fifteen minutes during certain hours of the day. The news was at first received with incredulity, but it was true. "Big Bertha," as she was called, was located in the Forest of St. Gobain, 75 miles from Paris! The original gun, with six of her crew, was blown up by an explosion, and a sister was put out of action by French gunfire; but there were others of the family, and the shelling was continued, on and off, till July. The cruellest bombardment took place on Good Friday, when a church was hit and seventy of the worshippers were killed. Many experts and others rushed into print with fantastic theories and explanations of "Big Bertha." She was really a big naval gun, about 65 feet long and was fired at an angle of 60 degrees. The shell, which was made in two parts and grooved to fit the rifling of the gun, was five feet long and weighed 300 lb. It took three minutes on its flight to Paris, and reached a maximum height of 22 miles!

Battle of the Lys. The German offensive, fought to a standstill on the Amiens front about April 6th, broke out again in a fresh place. On the morning of the 9th eight German divisions were hurled against our line between Armentières and La Bassée. This sector was held by troops supposed to be having a rest after the Somme fighting; in the centre, near Neuve Chapelle, was a Portuguese division, which was to have been relieved the next day. The force of the assault was too much for the Portuguese and they gave way; and the British division on their left was pressed back at right angles to the line. The southern end of the sector was splendidly held by the 55th Lancashire Division, which refused to be moved from Festubert and Givenchy, and even made a counter-attack, taking nearly a thousand prisoners.

On the 10th Von Armin's army attacked north of Armentières, and captured Messines and Ploegsteert, but was driven out of the former village by a South African brigade. South of Armentières we retired up the Lys to Estaires and Merville. Estaires was held till nightfall, and considerable losses were inflicted on the enemy by machine-guns from the upper floors of the houses. Armentières was so full of gas that it had to be evacuated. We could not keep the enemy out of Merville, but the strong resistance there delayed them till reinforcements had formed a defensive line covering the Forest of Nieppe and Bailleul. Their advance was not pushed



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Battle of the Lys.

much further up the Lys, but a determined attack was made in the direction of Hazebrouck. We lost Neuve Eglise, and retired on Meteren, forming a line to cover the village of Loche and Kemmel Hill, an inconsiderable but important height south-west of Ypres. Wytschaete was taken by Von Armin on the 16th, and Meteren, after being taken and retaken several times, finally remained in the hands of the enemy. About the same time the salient on the Passchendaele Ridge was withdrawn much closer to Ypres. The British troops, many of whom had already fought in the Somme battles, now received welcome assistance from the French divisions sent up by General Foch.

Kemmel Hill. If the Germans had known how thinly we held the Forest of Nieppe they might have tried to force their way through, but they did not like the look of it and chose to concentrate all their efforts on Kemmel Hill. The first attempt, on April 17th, was pressed with great determination but was everywhere repulsed. The French took over the Kemmel sector on the 21st. The Germans brought up fresh divisions and made another assault on the 25th. This time they were more successful; they captured Locre and Kemmel Hill and village, but were afterwards driven out of Locre by the French. For the next two days the enemy fought vigorously to exploit his gains, but could make no further impression against the firm resistance of British and French; and by the end of the month his offensive was definitely brought to a standstill. All his attempts to break through from La Bassée had failed, though six divisions wore themselves out against Festubert and Givenchy. In this battle, which lasted three weeks, the Germans used 33 fresh divisions and nine from the Somme. The British had eight fresh divisions and 17 from the Somme.

Villers-Bretonneux. While the Battle of the Lys was in progress there was some local fighting on the Somme battle-front, chiefly round Hangard, where the British line joined the French. Two affairs of some importance took place. On April 18th the French made a sweep up the valley of the Avre and removed the enemy threat south-east of Amiens. On the 23rd four German divisions made an attack on Villers-Bretonneux, a vital position about six miles east of Amiens. Their tanks broke through our line and the village was captured. But our heavy tanks came into action and a pitched battle was fought between these Dreadnoughts of the land in which the German tanks got the worst of it and the advance was stopped. After dark a daring night-operation was secretly undertaken by British and Australian brigades under General Hobbs, and at daybreak the Germans in Villers-Bretonneux found themselves almost surrounded. They managed to clear out of the village with the loss of 1,000 prisoners.

End of the Great Offensive. The Kaiser was at the German Headquarters on March 21st and elated with the success of the first day's fighting, is said to have announced, "This is *my* battle." What he said on April 30th was not reported. By this date the two offensives had worn themselves out and in neither had the enemy gained his objects. He had not got Amiens, nor separated the British from the French, nor cut off the British Army in Flanders by fighting his way to the Coast. Nevertheless, the Allies had received something of a set-back. Some 1,500 square miles of ground had been yielded, and in round numbers the losses worked

out at 100,000 prisoners, 1,000 guns, 100 tanks and material to the value of £10,000,000. The total Allied casualties were about 300,000 to the Germans' 500,000.

It was often asked, "Where were our reserves?" Well, our reserves were in England, but before the end of April over 300,000 men had been sent across the Channel to France. That is why we were now able to hold a firm line against which the Germans might hurl themselves in vain.

CHAPTER II.

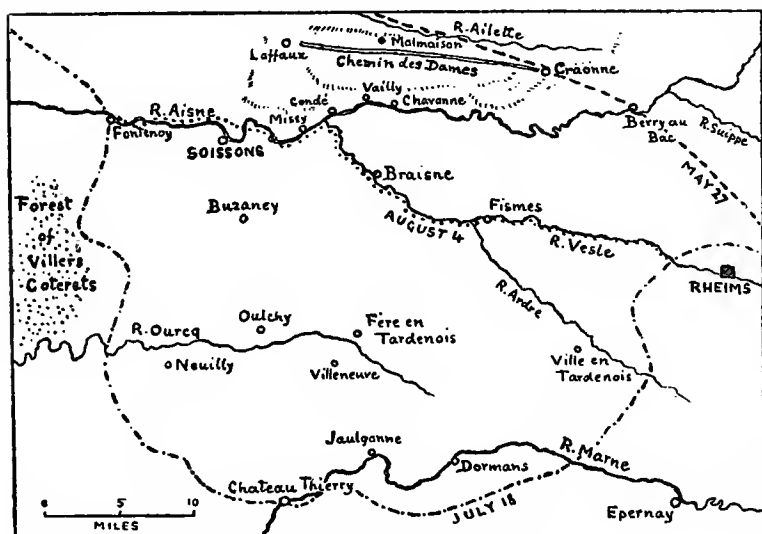
THE GREAT GERMAN OFFENSIVE. THE MARNE.

Germans Reach the Marne. Von Hindenburg required a month to "refit" before his next offensive. This time it broke out in an unexpected quarter, namely the sector between Soissons and Rheims. The Germans, it will be remembered, had been driven off the Aisne ridges in 1917 and were occupying the valley of the Ailette and the ridges beyond. The Chemin des Dames was thinly held by four French divisions, and from Craonne to Bermicourt, north of Rheims, were four British divisions having a rest after fighting in Flanders. Against these eight divisions the armies of Von Boehm and Fritz Von Below—25 divisions in all—were launched at 4.30 in the morning of May 27th. There was a short but very destructive bombardment, and the infantry attack was preceded by squadrons of tanks and aeroplanes. The impetus of the assault swept the French off the Chemin des Dames and in one day they lost all those heights north of the Aisne which they had slowly won by months of hard fighting. That evening the enemy was crossing the Aisne at many points between Vailly and Berry-au-Bac. The British right retired on Rheims, and the left, driven across the Aisne, kept line with the French right.

Next day the enemy reached the Vesle and forced a crossing at Braisne and Fismes. On the 29th Soissons fell, but Rheims held firm. The Germans pushed on to Fère-en-Tardenois, where the great Allied "dump" of stores and munitions fell into their hands. On the last day of the month Oulchy was taken and the Marne was reached at Jaulgonne, and soon afterwards at Château-Thierry on the west and Dormans on the east. On June 1st the bulge was pushed westward along the valley of the Ourcq, Neuilly was captured and the enemy approached within forty miles of Paris. The British force, meanwhile, pivoting on Thillois, near Rheims, fell back towards the Marne and regained some ground by counter-attacks.

Americans at Château-Thierry. By this time General Foch

had brought up his reserves and stopped the westward push to Paris on the edge of the Forest of Villers-Cotterets. Nor could the Germans cross the Marne at Château-Thierry. The northern part of the town was evacuated and a force of Americans and French Colonials took up position at the south end of the bridge. The Colonials, covered by American machine-gun fire, dashed across the bridge, drove the Germans out of the town, and recrossed to the southern bank. Under cover of darkness the enemy returned and tried to get across, but the Americans had mined the bridge. There was a tremendous explosion, and those who had crossed were killed



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The Aisne and the Marne.

or captured. This was only the beginning of the important part the Americans were to play in the second Battle of the Marne.

Push towards Compiègne. Hardly had this German thrust been parried than another followed in a fresh place. It was delivered by Von Hutier's army between Montdidier and Noyon, and was a bid for Compiègne; another step on the way to Paris. The French wings held firm, but after two days' fighting, regardless of cost, Von Hutier had pushed forward about five miles in the centre. He was held up by the French reserves, but made a last effort with four fresh divisions borrowed from Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, and gained a little more ground. It was now Fayolle's

turn to strike. Headed by the "Baby" tanks, the French infantry hurled the enemy back on their former line, except on the French right, where Von Boehm came to Von Hutier's assistance, and the French fell back along the Oise to Ribecourt. Von Boehm also pushed forward between Soissons and Villers-Cotterets. This created a salient at Noyon, and to avoid being pinched, the French withdrew from it.

Attack on Rheims. The Crown Prince and his Staff were credited with a partiality for the wine of Champagne, and it was reported that there were six million bottles stored away in the cellars of Rheims. As the Germans had already been through the city once, this is rather hard to believe; but whether this was the bait that lured him or not, the Crown Prince was determined to have Rheims. About the middle of June a violent attack was made on the city by Fritz Von Below. A frontal assault from the north by three divisions got into the shell-battered outskirts, but was driven back with great slaughter, and Von Below's attempts to encircle Rheims from east and west ended in complete failure.

Austrian Offensive in Italy. As Italy now formed part of the Western Front, it will be convenient here to give a short account of the great Austrian failure to force the Asiago-Piave line. It should be mentioned that the British force in Italy, under the Earl of Cavan, had been moved in March from the Montello district, where it had a fairly quiet time, to the Asiago Plateau, a much livelier spot. The Austrians evidently intended their big summer offensive to be final. It was made along the whole Italian Front, with practically all the seventy divisions of Von Hotzendorf's Armies. The assault was timed for dawn on June 15th. But the Italians got wind of it and opened a hot bombardment on the Austrian lines soon after midnight. Nevertheless, 7,000 Austrian guns burst into fire at 3 a.m. and the assault was made under cover of smoke-bombs and fog-producers. Like most assaults in mass, it met with a certain amount of success at the outset. The British on the Asiago-Plateau were attacked by four divisions. The Austrians broke through the centre, but the British retired to two switch-lines at the sides and the enemy found themselves in a kind of pocket. They were raked by flank-fire and driven out with heavy loss. The Piave was crossed at several points, notably Santa Dona and Campo Sile on the marshes near the sea, where the enemy advanced three miles. They also got across at Nervesa, and fought their way on to the plateau of Il Montello. For a day or two the position looked serious for the Italians, but, as it happened, the enemy was unable to exploit his gains.

Austrians Hurled Back. The Austrian infantry had been on

scanty rations, and seized the opportunity to gorge themselves to such an extent with the food and wine which fell into their hands that they were in no condition to press their advantage. As the Italian reserves came up, they were pinned to their positions and gradually driven back on the river. And now the rain came down and the Piave was soon in flood. The bridges were swept away and the Austrians on the western bank were cut off from their supports and supplies. On the 23rd, General Diaz struck with his whole force. The enemy was driven across the Piave at every spot except on the marshes at the delta. Twenty thousand prisoners were taken, and thousands were drowned in the surging waters. Italian cavalry crossed the river and scattered the fugitives from the eastern bank. Diaz now turned his attention to the northern heights. The resistance was strong, but the captured positions were retaken, and most of the captured guns, with 200 Austrian guns in addition. Austria's great effort had ended in disaster and Von Hotzendorf lost his command.

Germans Cross the Marne. Four German offensives had now been fought to a standstill, but Hindenburg could not hold his hand. The German people were clamouring for Paris, and the High Command had to promise them Paris without delay. It was a tall order. The British armies in France were stronger than ever; the French were fighting as gamely as they had fought at Verdun and Malmaison, and the Germans had at last realised that the Americans were a formidable and ever-increasing barrier to success: they had kept seven German divisions in play in the last push, and knocked five of them out. To crown all, the Allied strategy was directed by a genius infinitely superior to Hindenburg and Ludendorff, not to mention the Crown Prince. Nevertheless, another offensive had to be made. It was intended to be the last great stroke: and it was. The attempts to get to Paris from the north and the west having failed, a movement was started to get round by the south. On July 15th a combined assault was made by the two armies in the Marne bulge and Von Einem's army east of Rheims; forty divisions in all. It was anticipated by the Allies, who plastered the Germans with shell three hours before they began their bombardment. The attack east of Rheims was held up all along the line by General Gouraud. South-west of Rheims the French army (which included an Italian Corps) had to give a little ground. Between Dormans and Château-Thierry the enemy flung pontoon bridges across the Marne and managed to force a crossing and establish a "bridgehead" position between Fossoy and Dormans. But at Fossoy they found themselves face to face with the Americans. They were no match for these tough athletes from the West when it

came to a hand-to-hand struggle. With fixed bayonets and the battle-cry of "Lusitania" the Americans charged and drove them back across the Marne. Many were drowned and 1,500 prisoners left behind.

The Crown Prince flung his reserves into the battle, but headed off by the Americans on the west, he could only advance up the river towards Epernay, where two and a half million bottles of his favourite beverage were said to be stored. On the 17th six German divisions were south of the Marne, making for Epernay. July 18th is another story. As there can be no looking back when once this story is begun, we will pause here and leave the Germans across the Marne while we have a look round and consider the events that happened in other theatres of war by land and sea and air, till the end of August.

CHAPTER III.

RUSSIA AND TURKEY-IN-ASIA.

Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The Peace Conference at Brest-Litovsk lasted quite a long time and was anything but peaceful. The German terms were too stiff, even for the Bolsheviks, who had been counting on a peace "by arrangement," but found that all the "arrangements" were dictated by the Germans. Lenin and Trotsky haggled and blustered, and at length helplessly declared that they would not make peace and could not go on with the war. The Germans declared the armistice at an end and re-opened the offensive. On February 18th they took Dvinsk and Lutsk, and as the Russians were quite unable to offer any opposition, they had a grand military "walk over" for five days, getting as far as Minsk and Borisoff. This brought Lenin and Trotsky to their knees, and they begged for peace on any terms. The Germans would not or could not stop their advance—they seized Reval and Pskoff, and occupied Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine. However, the treaty was signed on March 3rd and the Russians now knew what "no annexations and no indemnities" meant, as the Germans "understood it." Germany was to have Poland, Lithuania, Courland and Esthonia; £300,000,000 (half of it in gold) and a commercial arrangement which placed the trade and products of Russia entirely in German hands. Nor was this all. Ostensibly to protect the inhabitants of the Ukraine from the Bolsheviks, they had already got military possession of that province, which, "as they understood it," comprised all Southern Russia in Europe. This gave them Odessa and other ports on the Black Sea, and control of the Black Sea Fleet.

Treaty of Bucharest. The fate of Russia decided the fate of Roumania. The Roumanians had to disarm some Bolshevik regiments which had become very disorderly and were plundering the Roumanian villages. Lenin took offence at this, imprisoned the Roumanian minister at Petrograd and ordered the arrest of the King of Roumania ! This high-handed proceeding was followed by an ultimatum that Roumania must make peace with Germany within four days. This time limit was kindly extended to three weeks. Roumania, hard pressed by the enemy, isolated from her friends, and betrayed by her "Ally," had no alternative, and a Treaty of Peace was signed at Bucharest. The Dobrudja was ceded to Bulgaria, freedom of the Danube and Black Sea granted to the Central Powers, the army demobilised and arms and munitions surrendered, and all corn, oil and other products of the country placed at the disposal of the Germans.

The Allies in Russia. Finland, like the Ukraine, had to choose between the Bolsheviks and the Germans. A terrible struggle was going on there between the White Guards (anti-Bolsheviks) and the Red Guards, who were committing frightful atrocities. The White Guards were really getting on quite well, when a German force was landed at Helsingfors and helped them to drive the Red Guards out of the country. Finland was now proclaimed a republic under German protection.

The inhabitants of Northern Russia were anti-German and anti-Bolshevik and invited the Allies to send a force to protect the railway from the ice-free port of Murmansk to Petrograd. The request was complied with, and in July British, French and American troops were landed on the Murman Coast and afterwards at Archangel on the White Sea.

Wandering about Siberia was a scattered force of Czecho-Slovaks. They were natives of Bohemia and Northern Hungary, who had been compelled to fight for the Austrians against their will, and on being taken prisoners had joined the Russian armies. They did not like the Bolsheviks any better than the Austrians, and were now retreating along the Siberian railway in an attempt to reach Vladivostock and join the Allies on the Western Front. They were commanded by Russian officers and were forming quite a considerable army under General Alexeieff. The Allies decided to go to the help of the Czecho-Slovaks and save Siberia. The Japanese were the first to land at Vladivostock ; they were followed by other allied detachments, which advanced along the railway and seized the important stations and depôts.

Atrocities in Russia. The horrors of war in Russia were nothing compared with the horrors of peace. We can only mention

a few of the most notable of the atrocities committed. Early in July Count Mirbach, the German "ambassador," was assassinated at Moscow. A fortnight later General Von Eichhorn, Military Governor of the Ukraine, was murdered at Kiev. But the most pathetic tragedy of the summer was the fate of the Imperial Family. It seems fairly certain that the Tsar, his wife, his young son and four daughters were murdered at Ekaterinburg on July 16th. According to the most trustworthy reports they were taken down to the cellar of the convent where they were imprisoned and placed with their backs against the wall. The Tsar was shot first; then the others one by one. One of the daughters, the Grand Duchess Tatiana, who was not shot dead, was finished off by the butt-end of a rifle. Their bodies were either buried or burnt in a neighbouring wood. Next day three Grand Dukes and a Grand Duchess—relations of the Tsar—were taken from Ekaterinburg and thrown down a coal mine.

On August 30th, a Russian Charlotte Corday fired three shots at Lenin, inflicting serious wounds. By way of reprisals the Bolshevists murdered hundreds of innocent people and threw all French and British subjects into prison. The Red Guards attacked the British Embassy. Captain Cromie, the British Naval Attaché, defended the building with great courage, but he was killed in the fighting and his body was dreadfully mutilated by the Bolshevists.

The fate of the famous Russian Generals rests on unreliable evidence, and he would be a rash man who would confidently affirm what happened to them. Kaledin is said to have committed suicide in February. Korniloff was murdered and otherwise died about once a month. Alexeieff came to life again to command the Czecho-Slovaks. Brusiloff, his legs broken by the soldiers he had led to victory, was reported as begging his bread in Moscow. The Grand Duke Nicholas, after two deaths, was said to be in Berlin, and commanding the Cossacks in the Caucasus.

Allenby in Palestine. General Allenby did not lose much time in advancing from Jerusalem. He drove the Turks north along the Shechem road and east towards the Jordan. On February 21st Jericho was captured. Bridges were thrown across the Jordan and mounted troops made a raid on the Hedjaz railway, which runs through the old country of the Ammonites to Damascus and Aleppo. Hedjaz is on the Red Sea, the new kingdom ruled by the Arab Chief who had lately taken Medina and Mecca from the Turks. He was our ally, and he and his Arabs saw to it that travelling by the Damascus line was made as uncomfortable as possible for our enemies. During the heat of the summer there was a pause, while General Allenby was quietly making his preparations for the *grand coup* of the autumn, which belongs to a subsequent chapter.

Mesopotamia. The spectacular part of the campaign in Mesopotamia was finished with the capture of Bagdad, and General Marshall had not the same chance of writing his name in history as his predecessor. But he dealt with a difficult problem in a masterly manner. The collapse of Russia had set free all the Turks south of the Caucasus and there was a chance of trouble in Persia. But General Marshall was not content with merely marking time. He pushed up the Euphrates from Ramadie and on March 9th occupied Hit, the centre of the great Bitumen fields which supplied the pitch for Noah's Ark. By the end of March the Turks were driven another eighty miles up the river past Anah, with the loss of many prisoners and guns. April and May were spent in a successful advance on Kirkuk, some 150 miles north of Bagdad, when the terrific heat brought operations to a close.

The Caucasus. Meanwhile the Turks had been busy exploiting the occasion in the Caucasus. They had recaptured Erzeroum and taken Kars and Batoum from the Russians. A force of Armenians and anti-Bolshevist Russians had rallied for the defence of Baku, the great oil-centre of the Caspian. An effort had to be made to prevent the valuable petroleum wells from falling into the hands of the enemy, so a little British force was dispatched from Bagdad, and after a wonderful journey through the mountains of Persia it arrived at Baku in August. But when it came to the point our Allies showed little inclination for the fight, and as the British force was too small to hold such a large area alone, it had to fall back from Baku. The leader of this expedition, General Dunsterville, was the original "Stalky" of Rudyard Kipling's great school-story, "Stalky and Co.," and no doubt his peculiar genius found ample scope in this adventure.

CHAPTER IV.

RAIDS BY SEA AND AIR.

The "Goeben" and "Breslau" Again. On the morning of January 20th, our old friends the *Goeben* and *Breslau* steamed out of the Dardanelles into the Mediterranean Sea, intent on doing some damage, no doubt. They made for the island of Imbros, and sank two of our monitors with their gun-fire. But they were bombed by seaplanes and worried by the destroyers *Tigress* and *Lizard*, which also drove off four Turkish torpedo-boats. The Turko-German cruisers were headed off and driven into a minefield. The *Breslau* struck four mines and sank very quickly. The *Goeben* tried to regain the Dardanelles, but struck a mine at the entrance, and after slowly making her way up the straits, was run ashore in

the Narrows opposite Chanak. Here she was bombed from the air and badly damaged, but a submarine which tried to torpedo her was sunk.

The "Vindictive" at Zeebrugge. At the end of 1917 there were changes at the Admiralty. Sir John Jellicoe retired with a peerage and Sir Rosslyn Wemyss became First Naval Lord. In January, 1918, Admiral Roger Keyes succeeded Admiral Bacon in command at Dover. One of the duties of the Dover Patrol was to prevent enemy submarines from passing through the straits, and for this purpose numbers of drifters and patrol-boats were employed night and day. From their lair at Zeebrugge, German destroyers would sometimes pounce out on a dark night and attack our small craft. They got through twice in the early part of the year and sank some drifters; the second time they met with a warm reception and lost four of their number in the flight for home.

Admiral Keyes prepared a daring plan for stopping these raids at the fountain-head. On the night of April 22nd—the eve of St. George's Day—an oddly assorted little fleet set out for Zeebrugge. It was composed of the twenty-year old 5,000 ton cruiser *Vindictive*, equipped with a false upper-deck and a number of "brows" or gangways on the port side; three smaller and older cruisers, *Iphigenia*, *Intrepid* and *Thetis*, laden with concrete and explosives; two Mersey ferry-boats, *Iris* and *Daffodil*; an obsolete submarine (crammed with explosives) and a flotilla of motor-boats and other small craft. As they approached Zeebrugge the small craft put up a dense screen of smoke under the direction of Lieutenant Brock, and the cruisers got within 600 yards of the entrance before drawing the fire of the enemy guns. The *Vindictive* with *Iris* and *Daffodil* in attendance, got safely through the shell-fire and ranged herself against the outer wall of the mole protecting the harbour. The "brows" were thrown out, and as little *Daffodil* snorted and strained and shoved to keep *Vindictive* steady against the mole, a body of bluejackets and marines dashed across on to the parapet, and a drop of 20 feet brought them down on the mole itself. The Germans were now thoroughly aroused and their searchlights and machine guns were in full play. The crews of their destroyers on the other side of the mole rushed up to repel the raid, but were driven back, and our men were able to complete the destruction of the works on the mole within an hour, when the siren sounded for a dash back to the *Vindictive*.

Meanwhile the old submarine had been blown up under the railway viaduct higher up the mole, Lieutenant Sandford and his crew of seven escaping in a little dinghy just in time. The *Thetis* grounded outside the harbour and was abandoned. The *Intrepid*

steamed ahead through the entrance and was blown up by Lieut. Bonham-Carter in the fairway of the Bruges Canal. The *Iphigenia*, blinded by the *Intrepid's* smoke, ran into a barge which she carried along with her till stopped by a mud-bank, where she was blown up and sunk. Motor-boats played a gallant part in rescuing the crews under a heavy fire. The battered *Vindictive* got safely home after the most exciting night's work a sailor could desire.

The "Vindictive" at Ostend. On that same St. George's eve the two old cruisers *Brilliant* and *Sirius*, laden with concrete, had made for Ostend, but owing to a change of wind had to be sunk outside the harbour. On May 9th, manned by the crew of the *Brilliant*, the *Vindictive* departed on another trip. A fog came on as she approached Ostend about 2 a.m., but guided by flares flung out by a motor-boat, she entered the harbour and rammed her bow against the eastern pier. She was swept by such a terrific shell-fire that the officers retired to the conning-tower. Commander Godsall, however, went out on deck to see if his ship was swinging round properly, and was at once killed by a shell. Lieutenant Crutchley, after searching in vain for his commander's body, gave the order to blow up the ship. The officers and crew got away in two motor-boats, and this was perhaps the most exciting part of the adventure. The boats were so badly hit that they had to be destroyed on reaching the *Warwick*.

Surely no other ship has ever gained five Victoria Crosses in the last three weeks of her life ! Yet this is what the *Vindictive* did—Captain Carpenter, Life Captain Bamford, R.M.L.I., Sergeant Finch, R.M.A., and A.B. McKenzie (Zeebrugge) and Lieutenant Crutchley (Ostend) were selected by the officers and men for this distinction. Lieutenant Sandford of the submarine and Lieutenants Thompson, Bourke and Drummond of the motor-boats were also awarded the V.C. for gallantry conspicuous even amidst all the fearlessness of those two daring raids.

Exploits in the Adriatic. A brilliant feat was performed on June 9th by Commander Rizzo of the Italian Navy. He was patrolling the Adriatic with two little motor-boats, each carrying two torpedoes, when three of the largest Austrian battleships were sighted, protected by a screen of destroyers. There was every excuse for getting out of the way as quickly as possible, but Rizzo did not think so. After giving instructions to the midshipman in charge of the other boat, he dashed at full speed between the destroyers, got within 200 yards of the leading battleship and discharged his two torpedoes with such effect that she sank on the spot. The midshipman also got through the destroyers and scored a hit on the second battleship with his second torpedo. This was

not Commander Rizzo's first exploit. A few months before, he had dashed into the harbour of Trieste and sunk the battleship *Wien*. Another Italian officer on May 14th entered Pola harbour in a motor-boat and torpedoed the *Viribus Unitis*, Austria's latest in Super-Dreadnoughts.

U Boats and Q Boats. The "ruthless submarine campaign" which was to have won the war for Germany in two months, was still going on in 1918 with decreasing success. The total tonnage sunk, allied and neutral, dropped from 575,010 in July 1917 to 281,000 in June 1918. The Allies were at last beginning to get even with the losses, thanks to the gigantic efforts of America in shipbuilding. Over half of the American forces were brought across the Atlantic in British ships escorted by British destroyers, and this imposed an additional strain on our Navy and our Mercantile Marine. It was not till quarter of a million Americans had been brought to Europe that the Germans were able to sink a transport from America. This was the *Toscana*, torpedoed off the Irish Coast on February 5th; over 2,000 of the troops on board were rescued by British destroyers. During the German offensive the despatch of American troops was speeded up by President Wilson. On July 2nd, a million had landed in Europe, and they were being sent over at the rate of 300,000 a month.

The vigilance and ingenuity of the Royal Navy made the Home Waters too dangerous a hunting ground for any but the most daring U boat commanders. It is not for a mere landsman to describe how this was done. The reader who would know all about mine-fields, depth-charges, Blimps, hydrophones, microphones, and "gadgets" should study the fascinating stories by "Bartimaeus," "Taffrail" and other breezy sailor men. The bigger submarines exploited the High Seas, where they sometimes had the misfortune to make the acquaintance of our "Mystery Ships" or "Q Boats." A "Q Boat" had the outward appearance of a dirty old tramp or collier. There was nothing to indicate that she was an armed ship manned by officers and men of the Royal Navy. The camouflage was perfect in every detail, even to a negro cook and a stuffed parrot in a cage. The conning-tower was a hawser-reel, a periscope was concealed in a chimney pipe and a wireless installation under coils of rope. Two four-inch guns lay hidden in the after part of the ship and a 12-pounder in the fore-castle, ready to pop up at the pressing of a lever. The U Boat, contemptuous of its prey, would probably come to the surface. Thereupon there was wild confusion on the deck of the tramp as the "panic crew," disguised as ordinary seafaring men, took to the boats, not forgetting the pet in the cage. In fancied security the U Boat would approach the

apparently abandoned tramp, not wishing to waste a torpedo on such a mean object, to be received with a storm of shell and a hail of lead, from which it rarely, if ever, recovered. The Q Boat game required the highest quality of coolness and courage, as the "tramp" always ran the risk of being torpedoed without warning. Of course, the Q Boats were not advertised in the papers; there was only a brief announcement now and then that Lieutenant Auten or Lieutenant Bonner or Captain Gordon Campbell had been awarded the V.C. for "services in action with enemy submarines."

Air Raids. The Gothas continued their unwelcome moonlight visits, though they found increasing difficulty in getting through our barrage. On January 28th, they made persistent efforts all through the night, and four succeeded in getting to London, inflicting casualties to the number of 56 killed and 170 injured. One Gotha was brought down in Essex. The two raids in February were not so destructive. On March 7th, a dark moonless night, bombs were dropped on London, not by Zeppelins, as some thought at the time, but by Gothas taking a mean advantage of an *Aurora Borealis*, which was in great form that night. At the request of the Archbishop of Cologne, we had refrained from bombing that city on the occasion of the religious procession on Corpus Christi day. The Germans showed their gratitude by a raid over London on Whit Sunday. The bombs dropped were extra powerful and did much damage in a limited area. However, they paid the penalty. Seven Gothas were brought down by our guns and airmen, and this was the last aeroplane raid on London. Zeppelins visited the North-East coast three or four times and on August 5th one was brought down by Lieutenant Cadbury, the second time he had performed the feat.

The Royal Air Force. No date more unsuitable than April 1st could have been selected for the creation of the R.A.F. which was a combination of the R.F.C. and the R.N.A.S., and was quite distinct from the Army and Navy. Our air-squadrons, with the French, rendered priceless service in the days of the great retreat, worrying the advancing enemy and sometimes throwing into confusion a whole battalion with a nicely planted bomb or a shower from a Lewis gun. The toll of the air was a heavy one, and included our most famous flyer, Major McCudden, V.C., and Baron Von Richthofen, leader of the "Travelling Circus." The deeds of two fearless airmen, who both won the V.C., must speak for the rest. Lieutenant Jerrard, after a fight with five German aeroplanes, flew at a height of 50 feet over one of their aerodromes and tackled, single-handed, nineteen planes rising from the ground. Fresh planes swarmed round him, and after being ordered back he

repeatedly turned and attacked his pursuers. Lieutenant McLeod, flying with an observer, was attacked by eight enemy planes; three were shot down. Then, with five wounds, his petrol tank pierced, his machine on fire, he controlled his machine from the left-hand bottom plane, landed between the lines and rescued his wounded observer from the burning wreckage. The French "ace of aces" was Lieutenant Fonck, who had over a hundred victims to his credit before the end of the war.

An "Independent Air Force" was formed for the purpose of carrying out raids, in conjunction with the French, on the enemy "back areas." These raids were generally made in broad daylight and served real military objects, except a few definitely undertaken as reprisals for the raids on London and Paris. The German railways suffered severely, especially the junctions at Thionville and Metz Sablons. The chemical and munition works, aeroplane factories and military dépôts in the Rhine district were repeatedly bombed and damaged. Mannheim was kept in a state of panic, and Stuttgart, Mainz, Coblenz and Cologne were visited by our squadrons. It is said that the Kaiser went one day to Cologne to cheer the people up. Our I.A.F. had selected the same day for a raid on Cologne, and the Kaiser had the pleasure of spending two hours in a cellar.

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT ALLIED OFFENSIVE. JULY—AUGUST.

General Foch's Master-Stroke. We can now resume the story of the Second Battle of the Marne, which we broke off so abruptly at the end of Chapter II. July 18th, marked the turning point of the War on the Western Front. On the morning of that memorable day there were seven or eight German divisions south of the Marne. They were not pushing towards Paris, as one might have expected, but in exactly the opposite direction, towards Epernay. What their object was we do not know, as they never got to Epernay. A halt was suddenly called, and that afternoon they were hurrying back to the Marne—next day they were hastily recrossing the river with the French and Americans at their heels. What had happened to cause this sudden change in their plans? The fact was, General Foch had struck; not against the Germans advancing on Epernay, but against the west side of the salient. The blow was dealt by the armies of Mangin and Degoutte, reinforced by the French reserves and many American divisions. Preceded by swarms of tanks and planes they had burst on the Germans early in the morning of the 18th and caught them unawares. Mangin's troops,

emerging from the Forest of Villers-Cotterets, carried everything before them and finished the day by capturing the Mont de Paris, overlooking Soissons. Degoutte pushed his left up the valley of the Ourcq towards Neuilly. Fifteen thousand prisoners and over 300 guns fell to the Franco-Americans on that day.

German Retreat to the Vesle. By the 20th Mangin had fought his way to Buzancy and Degoutte was nearing Oulchy. No wonder Von Boehm and Von Below were in haste to recross the Marne and get their thirty or forty divisions out of the salient while the neck was still wide enough. The Americans were already across the river at Château Thierry. Mangin and Degoutte, swinging round on Buzancy, forced the retreating enemy over the Ourcq and retook Fère-en-Tardenois on the 28th. General Berthelot's army between Rheims and the Marne, which included British, Americans and Italians, also joined in the squeeze and recaptured Ville-en-Tardenois before the end of the month.

By this time the late salient was considerably flattened, and in the next four days it disappeared altogether. At first the German retreat had been powerfully covered by rearguards, so that they succeeded in getting away much of their armament and material; but now it became a rush for the Vesle and large numbers of prisoners and guns fell into the hands of the Allies. On August 1st, Mangin recaptured Soissons and pushed his line north of the Aisne. The Germans made a determined effort to hold Fismes, but the town was stormed and captured by the Americans. By the 4th the enemy divisions were all across the Vesle (with the exception of 40,000 prisoners).

Marshal Foch. The French offensive of July 18th was no mere counter-attack to relieve local pressure or recover a lost position. It was the first act of a carefully thought-out scheme, a combined advance from which there was to be no looking back; in fact, the beginning of the end. The Germans had all along enjoyed the advantage of operating on interior lines—the inside of the curve—and could rush their reserves from one spot to another much more quickly than the Allies could. But this advantage was rapidly disappearing. The Allies were now superior in men and guns. Their commander-in-chief, who was created a Marshal in recognition of his first great success, seized the initiative and Hindenburg had to conform to his plans. Blows were to be struck so rapidly and in such force at different points on the line that the enemy had no sooner rushed up reinforcements to one spot than they were needed at another. Even during the German retreat from the Marne Gouraud had struck east of Rheims and Fayolle at Montdidier. The new Marshal was content to leave the enemy on the

Vesle for the present, while a crushing blow was dealt to them at another spot.

Battle of Amiens. The second act of Foch's strategical drama had Amiens for its background. The curtain was rung up at dawn on August 8th. It was stage-managed by Sir Douglas Haig, and entrusted to Rawlinson's Fourth Army and the First French Army (Debeney). Opposed to them was the Army of Von Marwitz, apparently quite secure in the delusion that the British were well-beaten and in no condition to force a battle. The great feature of the day was the astonishing success of the "whippet" tanks, which dashed forward into the open, accompanied by cavalry, and were on to the enemy batteries far behind the lines before the Germans realised that a battle had begun. In the triangle between the Ancre and the Somme little progress was made on the first day. We were held up at Morlancourt and a little village called Chipilly, situated on a spur in a bend of the Somme. These two strong points, packed with machine guns and stubbornly defended by the enemy, baffled all our efforts till late on the second day, when Morlancourt was stormed by the Australians, and Chipilly was silenced by British and Americans fighting side by side.

The advance was also held up at Morcourt on the southern bank of the Somme by flank-fire from the North, but between Morcourt and Rosières our progress was very rapid, and a big salient was pushed out for five miles. It was here that the whippets had their great success. There was no elaborate system of trenches and pill-boxes here such as we had met with at Arras, Cambrai and Passchendaele, and after the German positions had been well bombed by our air-squadrons, and the first line rushed by the infantry, the fast little tanks, supported by cavalry, dashed through and roamed at will through the open country. The Germans, who only counted on the pace of an infantry attack, were absolutely unprepared. One General of division was surrounded and captured in bed; the Corps Commander just managed to escape in his shirt (fortunately it was August) by leaping into a motor car, leaving his Staff to be taken prisoners. Train loads of troops coming up to the front found themselves safe in the hands of the British, and the Headquarters of the Anti-Tank Corps had to surrender to our tanks. The movements of the whippets were concealed by a slight natural mist, augmented by smoke bombs dropped from our planes; they were able to work their way behind the German big gun positions, and as they emerged snorting out of the cornfields in their rear they had them practically at their mercy. Ludendorff was particularly upset by the success of our tanks. In a "confidential order," issued on the 11th, he told his troops plainly that they had shirked

pick and shovel and neglected to block and wire the roads and put all the woods and villages in a proper state of defence. He also suggested that instead of allowing themselves to be surrounded and captured, they should have surrounded and captured the tanks and cavalry!

Debeney's Army seized both banks of the Avre and drove the Germans back in the direction of Roye, its left keeping line with the British south of Rosières. On the 9th, Humbert's Third Army joined in, captured Montdidier and carried the line level with Debeney. Rosières was also captured that day. On the 10th, the British north of the Somme got into the woods west of Bray. The push from Rosières to Chaulnes was held up at Lihons, but after stiff fighting the village was stormed by the British on the 11th. The French had now almost reached Roye and were fighting for the ridges overlooking Lassigny. The Germans had been driven back eight miles from the Avre, and the menace to Amiens and the Calais-Paris Railway was removed for ever.

By the 12th the advance seemed to have come to an end, but it was only the pause before the great movement which was to hurl the enemy back on the Hindenburg line. This pause on the Amiens front lasted nine days, but it was not altogether a period of rest for the Germans. Away north the British made a series of attacks in the Bailleul district and advancing along the Lys, recaptured Merville. To the south Mangin began his great advance on the 18th which was to achieve such grand results. His left wing, which joined Humbert's right on the Oise near Ribecourt, fought its way along the river towards Noyon, and in two days he captured 8,000 prisoners.

Battle of Bapaume. August 21st, like March 21st and July 18th, is a date to be remembered. It marks the beginning of that great Allied pressure which gradually spread from the North Sea to Verdun, and was to be continued without any relaxation till the final victory was achieved. It may be as well to mention the armies involved in the early stages of this great offensive. The right wing of the First Army (Horne) was covering Arras. Thence to Albert came the Third Army (Byng) and Rawlinson's Fourth Army continued the line till it joined up with the French south of Rosières. Debeney's First French Army (opposite Roye) came next, then Humbert's Third Army (overlooking Lassigny) and Mangin's Tenth Army from the Oise to Soissons. These three formed the Army Group of General Fayolle, but Debeney seems to have acted generally under the direction of Sir Douglas Haig.

It was Byng's Army which began the offensive of August 21st, in the district north and south of Serre. There was a dense fog,

which did not lift till late in the day, and made aeroplane work impossible in the early stages of the attack. The first assault took the enemy by surprise, and if the fog had dispersed early in the morning we might have got through to Bapaume, as we hoped. Tanks and infantry, however, lost their way and could not find their objectives, and the farthest point reached was Achiet-le-Petit, where the Guards seized the Arras-Albert Railway. Next day the battle raged between the Ancre and the Somme. The ruined town of Albert was occupied, Bray captured by the Australians and the line advanced about two miles.

Great Allied Advance. On the 23rd, the whole line was ablaze from Arras to the Aisne. Between Arras and Achiet the Guards and other British divisions swept away all opposition—Monchy was retaken on the 26th and before the end of the month they had reached the Hindenburg Line once more at Croisilles and Bullecourt. South of Serre the advance was over the old devastated battlefield of the Somme, and for the third time the ruined villages were changing hands. In three days Grandcourt, Thiepval, Mametz, Contalmaison and Martinpuich—those names so familiar in the fighting of 1916—were again in our possession. English troops fought their way through Delville Wood as South Africans had done two years before. On the 28th, New Zealanders reached and captured the ruins of Bapaume, and Australians were pushing along the banks of the Somme towards Peronne.

The French armies on our right met with equal success. Humbert drove the enemy from the Lassigny Ridge and captured the little town. Caught between two fires the Germans had to abandon Roye on the 27th, and the next day they were driven out of Chaulnes and Nesle. Mangin's move up the Oise—his left was now approaching Chauny—was of the greatest service to Humbert, who, after the capture of Lassigny, was able to push his right wing from Ribecourt towards Noyon, and on the 29th a fine assault by Zouaves drove the enemy out of that gas-reeking town. It had been practically destroyed by the Germans, and was so full of mines and traps that it could not be occupied for a week. On the same day Mangin crossed the Ailette.

The End of August. Hindenburg was very pleased with the "war of movement" which he created on March 21st. His pleasure was somewhat modified in July. On August 8th he must have realised that movement had its disadvantages, and the last week of the month must have convinced him that his armies were no match for the Allies in the open. We already know what Ludendorff thought. At any rate, whatever might be the plan of their High Command, the German armies were now in full retreat to the

"impregnable" position from which they started their offensive. The retirement was covered by stiff rearguard actions and the obstinate defence of small towns and villages which was only overcome by the determination and bravery of British, French and Americans. We were already up against the Hindenburg Line north of Cambrai, advancing east of Bapaume, and Australians were at the gates of Peronne. On the last day of the month they stormed Mont St. Quentin, the height which dominates the town, capturing 1,500 prisoners at a loss to themselves of only 25 men ! The French were across the Somme, and were driving the enemy up the Oise towards La Fère. Over 57,000 prisoners were captured by the British Armies alone during August. The Allies altogether had accounted for 130,000 since July 18th. And now, having reached the end of August, we can draw all our threads together and see how the glorious months of September and October led up to that final victory in November, which decided the fate of the Central Powers.

CHAPTER VI.

SEPTEMBER VICTORIES.

Capture of Peronne. By the assault of Mont St. Quentin on August 31st, the Australians had secured command of Peronne, but the enemy did not sacrifice this stronghold without a struggle. It was defended by the Second Guards Division. On September 1st the Australians stormed the town and after terrific fighting in the streets, which were swept by machine guns, the German Guards were driven out and took up a strong position east of the Somme with the Alpine Corps, at this time the best fighters in the German Army. A London Division carried Bouchavesne and swarmed across the Peronne-Bapaume road. Le Transloy and Sailly-Saillisel were captured on the 3rd. All these villages in the Somme area were in a more or less ruined condition, but they served as good cover for the German machine gunners who stuck to their posts with grim tenacity and had to be bombed out of their lairs before we could continue our advance. This proceeding required extraordinary pluck and resulted in heavy casualties, but one by one these wasps' nests were cleared by our tanks and infantry.

The Wotan Line. An offensive was launched south-east of Arras on September 2nd by the right wing of General Horne's Army, which accomplished one of the finest feats of the war. It was aimed against the vaunted "Wotan" Line, running from Drocourt to Quéant, which we had never been able to reach during the Battle of Arras. The defences here were the last word in German en-

gineering skill. There were no less than five lines, one behind another, and the trenches were so wide and deep, and the barbed wire so thick and strong, that they were supposed to be "tank-proof." But they proved to be neither tank-proof nor Canadian-proof, though eleven German divisions were concentrated for the defence of four and a half miles of line. The Canadians, with English and Scotch on their left, followed up the barrage with such impetus that quite early in the morning they were on the Wotan Line, and before the afternoon they were through the last of the five trench-systems. The sight of the tanks waddling across the trenches and smashing the uncut wire, combined with the determination of the Canadians, seems to have been too much for the Germans, and they sought refuge behind the Canal du Nord. The Canadians, while pursuing them across the open, charged and routed a reserve division coming up to restore the fortunes of the day and added considerably to their bag of prisoners. At Quéant, the junction of the line was pierced by Sir Charles Fergusson's Corps—English, Scotch and Royal Naval Divisions. This breakthrough of the Wotan Line made the German hold on the coal mining district of Lens very precarious and led to its evacuation a little later.

By September 7th we were seven miles east of Peronne. Roisel was captured by the Fourth Army, and the Third Army was driving the enemy out of the Havrincourt Woods. The British haul of prisoners for the first week in September was close on 20,000.

Humbert and Mangin. Meanwhile Fayolle's Army Group was giving the enemy no rest. Humbert and Mangin were pushing along both banks of the Oise towards La Fère. The latter was making such progress through the Forest of Coucy and along the Ailette that the Germans found their position on the Vesle in danger of being turned, and by September 4th they were in full retreat to the Aisne, pursued by the Franco-Americans of Degoutte and Berthelot. Humbert's advance was equally rapid. On the 7th he recaptured Tergnier and crossed the Crozat Canal. On his left Debeney was approaching St. Quentin. By this time the general line was almost that of the evening of March 21st; we had almost made good the retreat, but neither French, British nor Americans were content to let it remain at that. Marshal Foch was playing a winning hand, and Laon, St. Quentin and Cambrai were now within his grasp.

Americans at St. Mihiel. For four years the curious German salient at St. Mihiel had been an eyesore on the map of the Western Front. On September 12th it was wiped off the map for ever.

For some time the Americans had been fighting in divisions and corps attached to the British and French Armies. St. Mihiel was the first "show" an American Army had on its own. It was planned and carried out by their Commander-in-Chief, General Pershing. There were six or seven enemy divisions inside the salient, including at least one Austrian division. The main attack was made from the south, between the Meuse and the Moselle, while another attack was prepared on the western side from the Heights of the Meuse. At 1 a.m. on the 12th a bombardment was opened on both sides; at 5 came the attack from the south. The Germans made no stand against the fury of the assault; their tactics were a mad rush to get out of the salient before the pincers closed. By the afternoon the southern attack reached Thiaucourt and during the night the attackers from the west got to Vigneulles. Next morning the two forces joined hands and the salient was cut off. All the Germans who had not succeeded in effecting their escape, to the number of 15,000, fell into the hands of the Americans, with immense booty of guns and material.

To the French was assigned the honour of storming the bridge-head and entering the town of St. Mihiel. It was abandoned by the Germans quite early in the day, and that evening the two victorious generals, Pétain and Pershing, rode through together, receiving a grateful welcome from the inhabitants, chiefly women and children, who still remained after four years of German tyranny. A further advance by the French and Americans straightened the line from the Meuse, north of Verdun, to the Moselle, south of Metz. The German retreat was hastened and thrown into confusion by a flight of 150 American airmen, who bombed without mercy. The Germans said they were thinking about evacuating the St. Mihiel salient. Perhaps they were, but General Pershing saved them any further trouble.

Attack on the Hindenburg Line. In the first week of September the Hindenburg Line was pierced north of Cambrai. In the second week Mangin broke up the southern end in the Forests of Coucy and St. Gobain. By the middle of the month our Third and Fourth Armies had fought their way to the centre of the line, and on September 18th a violent assault was made between Gouzeaucourt and Holon (near St. Quentin)—a front of 17 miles. It met with instantaneous success. "On the whole of this front," says the official report, "our troops, advancing in heavy storms of rain, carried the enemy's positions by assault. Sweeping over the old British trench system of March, they reached and captured the outer defences of the Hindenburg Line in wide sectors." The battle lasted three days. On our right, supported by the French,

English and Scottish troops captured the villages north-west of St. Quentin, and two Australian divisions, penetrating the enemy's lines for three miles, reached Bellicourt on the St. Quentin Canal. Dismounted Yeomanry and Londoners captured Ronssoy and Epehy, overcame the stout defence put up by the fighting Alpine Corps, and "penetrated to a great depth." Similar progress was made south of Gouzeaucourt. The Germans mostly retired across the St. Quentin Canal and trusted to their "high velocity long-range" artillery barrage, from a distance of eight or ten miles, to hold up our further advance. They were also in the habit, at this time, of sending over gigantic "night-bombers" carrying a crew of eight men, and dropping bombs thirteen feet long and weighing a ton. Three of these were brought down on the night of the 18th, some of the occupants escaping by parachute.

The Heroes of Moeuvres. West of Cambrai we had taken Moeuvres. The same evening a tremendous counter-attack was launched against this sector: at most points it was repulsed by the Guards and two other divisions, but we had to abandon Moeuvres, which was immediately occupied by the enemy. The battle raged round Moeuvres for two days and nights, and when we eventually stormed and carried the village, it was hardly to be expected that any one of the little detachments which had been cut off and surrounded would still be holding out. But so it was. Corporal David Hunter and six privates of the Highland Light Infantry had held their assailants at bay for forty-eight hours, and were still holding out when relieved. The piles of corpses heaped round the position they occupied testified to the efforts of the enemy to get at them. When first cut off they decided to "wait and see." Later, suffering from lack of food, and ammunition running short, they resolved to fight their way out rather than surrender. Corporal Hunter's chief concern was that it delayed his leave which was due, and he wanted to see his wife and children. He was awarded the Victoria Cross.

Defeat of the Bulgarians. The scene now changes to the Balkans. In September, 1914, General Franchet D'Esperey, in command of the Fifth French Army, played an important part in the Battle of the Marne; our first great victory of the war. Exactly four years later, as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces in the Balkans he delivered a knock-out blow to Bulgaria, the first "final" victory of the war. The Allies on the Balkan Front were ranged from left to right as follow:—Italians in Southern Albania, French, Serbs and Jugo-Slavs in the Monastir area, and British and Greeks on the right, north of Salonika. The chief honour of dealing this blow to Bulgaria happily fell to the Serbs, who thus had

the satisfaction of avenging the defeat of three years ago, when their country was overrun by the Bulgar-German armies.

On September 15th the Franco-Serbian armies dashed to the attack east of Monastir. They swept the Bulgarians from their strong positions on the mountains and in five days fought their way some fifteen miles up the Tchernna. The Bulgars now began to lose heart and retreated rapidly, burning and abandoning everything behind them. The Serbs, by forced marches, reached the Vardar, cut the railway and separated the two Bulgarian armies between Prilep and Krivolak. Twenty-seven miles were covered in two days, and the Serbian cavalry was galloping ahead towards Uskub. An attack was made at the same time in the Doiran district by the British and Greeks under General Milne, who joined in the general pursuit of the enemy, now flying in confusion. By the 26th the Franco-Serbian forces had occupied Prilep, Veles and Istip. The British were the first to invade Bulgaria. Strumnitza was captured and the cavalry rode on ahead, cut off the enemy and joined the Serbs on the way to Uskub.

Bulgaria Surrenders. The Bulgars had now had enough. For some time they had not been feeling very pleased with Ferdinand or the Kaiser, who refused to send them help, and they had now lost thousands of prisoners and most of their material of war. As the Serbs were nearing Uskub the Prime Minister sent to ask for an armistice. The Germans made out that he had acted without authority, but this was proved to be incorrect, as a properly accredited mission came to General D'Esperey with the white flag and announced that Bulgaria was prepared for an unconditional surrender. The chief conditions dictated by the Allies were as follow: demobilisation of armies, evacuation of Serbia and free access through Bulgaria to the Danube. King Ferdinand, whose cunning had overreached itself, now had to pay the penalty. He was forced to abdicate, and retired to Vienna, to devote himself to the study of science. His son, Prince Boris, was placed on the throne. The surrender of Bulgaria was a tremendous blow to the Central Powers. It cut them off from Turkey—now at her last gasp—and opened the way for an Allied advance to the Danube, which meant serious trouble for Austria and Von Mackensen's army of occupation in Roumania.

Battle of Armageddon. No move was made in Palestine during the summer. Many of Allenby's best troops had been recalled to France after the great retreat in March, and he had to wait for fresh divisions from India. In the middle of September the line still ran from the sea, north of Jaffa, to the Jordan, north-east of Jericho. The Turkish Seventh and Eighth Armies held a

strong position in front of Shechem: the Fourth Army was east of the Jordan. Before the end of the month these armies were wiped out and Allenby was marching on Damascus.

The frontal attack was made on September 19th between Rafat and the sea. A big gap was opened in the Turkish lines, and through this gap rode our cavalry—British Yeomanry, Australians and Indians—across the Plain of Sharon to the passes of Megiddo. Debouching from the passes they swept round the rear of the Turkish armies in the plain of Esdraelon, and in thirty-six hours there was hardly an outlet left for their escape. On the east bank of the Jordan cavalry had seized the fords of the river, and the Arabs of the King of Hedjaz held the railway, so escape in this direction was also cut off. Nazareth was occupied by our cavalry on the 20th. It was the Headquarters of the German Commander, General Liman Von Sanders, and he just had time to escape with his staff. Two Indian Lancer regiments met the garrison of Haifa trying to cut across to Tiberias by night, and there was a grand moonlight cavalry charge on the plain of Esdraelon. Then, while one regiment cleared the slopes of Mount Carmel, the other rode into Haifa and secured the best harbour in Palestine. Most of this fighting took place on what is known as the Field of Armageddon—the entrance to the passes of Megiddo—famous in Scripture History as the great battle-ground of Israel and Judah, and, according to the Book of the Revelation, the place where the last great struggle in the world's history should be decided between the forces of Good and Evil.

Allenby's Crushing Victory. The Turks at first fought gamely to escape from the net which was being cast round them, but hard pressed by our infantry from the south, cut off by our cavalry on the north, hemmed in on all sides and bombed into confusion by our airmen from above, they soon began to surrender gladly by the thousand. The daily tale of prisoners increased by leaps and bounds from 18,000 to 30,000, 40,000 and so on till it soon greatly exceeded the total estimated strength of the three Turkish armies. Meanwhile, Acre, on the coast, was occupied, and Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee, and Sir Harry Chauvel's Desert Corps was pushing northward towards Damascus, rounding up the fugitives. The Turkish Fourth Army, east of the Jordan, was cut in two and gathered in by our mounted troops and the Hedjaz Arabs. General Liman Von Sanders found no resting-place at Damascus. Before midnight on the last day of the month mounted Australians were at the gates of the ancient city and Sanders was on his way to Aleppo.

Franco-American Offensive. While Ferdinand's throne was

tottering in Bulgaria and Allenby was counting the Turks in Palestine, Marshal Foch was keeping the Germans on the move on the Western Front. In fact, towards the end of September, the Allied attacks followed each other so rapidly and were on such a colossal scale that they are almost as baffling to the student of the war as they were to Hindenburg. Three great offensives were launched on successive days, and we will deal with them in order. On September 26th the French and Americans opened an attack on a front extending from Rheims to Verdun. This line had remained almost stationary since 1914, and the German defensive system, extending to a depth of several miles, had been made as impregnable as possible by four years' experience of trench-warfare. General Gouraud's Army attacked from Rheims to the Argonne, and quickly reached the Challerange railway, the objective never attained in the great Champagne push of September, 1915. The Americans had the difficult country of the Argonne Forest to tackle, but showed their aptitude for this kind of fighting by capturing Varennes and driving the enemy from their advanced positions. Pershing's right pushed seven miles along the Meuse, north of Verdun, to Montfaucon, and threatened the iron district of Briey, so valuable to the enemy. In three days' fighting over 20,000 prisoners were captured by the two armies.

Battle of Cambrai-St. Quentin. On September 27th Sir Douglas Haig began the Battle of Cambrai-St. Quentin, as we may call it, for it resulted in the capture of both these cities, which had defied us so long. The first attack was made by the Third Army, north and south of Moeuvres. The chief obstacle in the way was the Canal du Nord, which is broad for a canal and has steep sloping banks. Every inch of it was ranged by the heavy guns in the enemy back area, but our troops swarmed across, some by wading and swimming through the muddy water and others by bridges thrown across by our Engineers under a terrific shell-fire. Boursillon Wood was cleared, Marcoing captured, and the outskirts of Cambrai were entered that night. Over 10,000 prisoners were taken, and ten miles of the Hindenburg Line broken up. The next day the battle was taken up by Rawlinson's Army, which included the Australian Corps under General Monash and an American Corps. A big push was made between Le Catelet and St. Quentin. The canal was crossed by a Midland division by means of rafts and lifebelts (borrowed from the Channel leave-boats !) while tanks got over the three-mile tunnel north of Bellicourt, in the wake of the Americans. A breach of eight miles was made in the Hindenburg Line north of St. Quentin and the French had also broken through to the south. The fall of the city became imminent, and

the fires and explosions seemed to indicate that the Germans were preparing to evacuate. South of Cambrai we forced the Scheldt Canal and stormed Crèvecoeur, but there was as yet no sign that the enemy was willing to give up the town without a most determined struggle.

King Albert's Victory. The third offensive began on the 28th in Flanders. It was undertaken by the Belgians, French and Second British Army, with King Albert in command. In two days the Allies advanced farther than they had done in three months in 1917. The Belgians began by capturing Dixmude and wading swiftly through the swamps and marshes of the Merckem Peninsula, cleared the Germans out of Houthoult Forest and reached Staden, Plumer swept over the ground we had won during the Third Battle of Ypres and abandoned in April during the dark days of the retreat. In two days he had taken Poelcappelle and Passchendaele, and was within a mile of Roulers and Menin. Further south the Messines ridge had been seized once more, this time with the greatest of ease. At the end of the two days' battle 10,000 prisoners were counted and positions occupied ready for another advance which would threaten the enemy's hold of the Belgian coast (where they were already being shelled by monitors from the sea) and probably force the evacuation of Lille. Von Armin had taken Ludendorff's advice and mined the roads in this area as a defence against tanks; but, as it happened, we did not use them on this occasion.

The End of September. The last week of September was, so far, the most wonderful week of the war. The "side-shows," as some people contemptuously called our expeditions away from the Western Front, had turned up trumps and gloriously justified their existence. By the victory over Bulgaria the Allies became supreme in the Balkans, and by the destruction of three Turkish armies in Palestine, the way was laid open to Aleppo and Constantinople. The three successful offensives on the Western Front, briefly described above, were astonishing enough, but they were to have rapid and amazing developments which even the most confirmed optimist could hardly have dared to foresee. In the last five days of September, on the Western Front alone, the Allies relieved the Germans of 50,000 prisoners and 700 guns.

CHAPTER VII.

OCTOBER VICTORIES.

Capture of St. Quentin. On the morning of October 1st a furious battle was raging for the possession of St. Quentin. The French had worked their way well to the south and almost to the

east, while the British were fighting their way round to the north. Terrific explosions were heard within the city and the Germans were escaping to the east with as much material and loot as they could carry away. That afternoon the French entered St. Quentin. The old historic city had suffered severely from four years of German occupation: nearly all the 50,000 inhabitants had been deported, the shops and houses were looted and mined, and little more than the bare walls of the grand old Cathedral were left standing. The enemy retreat was hard pressed by the British and French, but further north we had met with a bit of a set-back. The big tunnel south of Le Catelet, crossed by the Americans, was swarming with Germans, who worked their way back through underground "tubes" to the Hindenburg Line and recaptured Bony. They were driven out by the Australians. Another tunnel, a smaller one, is said to have been cleared by firing a German howitzer down one end, on which 4,000 scared Germans emerged with their hands up. Le Catelet was taken on the 3rd, Cambrai was being gradually enveloped from north and south, and fires and explosions began to indicate that the Germans knew that the end was at hand. About the same time the Germans were forced to straighten their line by retreating towards Lille and Douai. They evacuated Armentières, La Bassée and Lens, which were occupied by the British, who also seized the Aubers Ridge, overlooking Lille.

Capture of Cambrai. Our armies were gradually closing in round Cambrai: the First Army on the north and the Third on the south. It was obvious that the town must soon be surrounded, but the German High Command had all along regarded it as a vital point and seemed determined to hang on till the bitter end. Fires were raging in certain parts of the town, which must have been kindled by the enemy, as our guns did not shell Cambrai. The Canadian Corps bore the brunt of the fighting in the northern outskirts: they pushed forward a deep and narrow salient, exposed to fire from both flanks. Eleven German divisions were brought up against their three, and their losses were heavy, but they never wavered for a moment. After a fierce night-attack the Canadians had the honour of being the first to enter Cambrai in the early hours of the 9th. A little later English troops of Byng's Army entered from the south, and the two forces joined hands in the centre of the town. There was fighting all day in the streets before the Germans were finally driven out, and as our troops gathered in the huge square called the Place d'Armes, they found three sides of it in flames. Cambrai was not a safe place that night; the Germans had left many legacies in the shape of mines and bombs, and there was a series of explosions and fires which increased the damage already done to the town.

A great battle was fought south of Cambrai, which gave us 10,000 prisoners. The Germans beat a rapid retreat, leaving the roads choked with their baggage and material, and next day (10th) our pursuing columns reached Le Cateau. No doubt the few "Mons men" still in the Army fought their battles over again and pointed out to their comrades where Smith-Dorrien made his immortal stand against Von Kluck in August, 1914. Good progress was also made by the First Army north of Cambrai in the direction of Valenciennes; and Douai, set on fire by the enemy, was almost isolated. Debeney, advancing east of St. Quentin, reached Origny on the Oise.

Americans in the Argonne. The Franco-American advance between Rheims and Verdun met with considerable resistance, and after the first two days progress became rather slow. Early in October, however, Gouraud's left made a big push and drove the enemy ten miles north of Rheims. The Americans in the Argonne had one of the stiffest tasks of the war. "The extraordinary darkness and density of this forest," says an American correspondent, "is complicated by the strangeness of the ground on which it stands. That resembles nothing so much as the backbone and ribs of a flat fish. The ravines are so abrupt that one can almost step on the top of the trees immediately beneath one, and they follow each other in such a ceaseless succession that, though the length along the backbone is about twenty-five miles, the distance up and down the ribs would be at least fifty." The miles and miles of barbed wire, woven from tree to tree and covered with weeds and grass, made anything like rapid progress quite impossible. But the Americans fought their way yard by yard and "with a foe lurking behind every tree," by sheer determination overcame obstacles that might have been considered insuperable. At one point a battalion of 500 men was cut off for five days, living on roots and leaves, drinking the lavish rain-water and repelling attack after attack. Provisions and carrier-pigeons were dropped to them from aeroplanes, but fell out of their reach or got caught in the branches of the trees; and to climb a tree meant sudden death. At last they heard the sounds of a big battle approaching, and half delirious, burst out to join their rescuers. By October 12th the Americans had fought their way to the northern edge of the Forest and the French on their left reached Vouziers. The whole German army between the Oise and the Argonne was now in full retreat before the French, leaving "a line of blazing villages, red in the midnight sky."

Capture of Laon. The full meaning of Marshal Foch's strategy was becoming more apparent day by day. Big "pockets" were

formed in the German line by pushing to the flanks of their strong positions. The French advance on the Oise and north of Rheims was turning the Laon Plateau into one of these pockets. Laon was the corner-stone of the German line, just as Verdun was the corner-stone of the French line, and the French had hurled themselves in vain against Laon just as the Germans had at Verdun. And now, on October 13th, General Mangin, who had turned the Chemin des Dames and got through the Forest of St Gobain, entered Laon without a fight. The Germans had gone. There were hardly 5,000 inhabitants left in the town. The enemy had done little damage beyond using the Cathedral as a stable for their horses, and the usual looting. La Fère was taken the same day. Mangin then advanced to the river Serre, where he came up against the Hunding Line, a reserve position of some strength running from the Oise to the Aisne.

Advance in Flanders. No sooner had the Laon Plateau been cleared of the enemy than another offensive was launched—this time by King Albert's "Army Group of Flanders." The French and Belgians captured Roulers, and after the booby-traps had been cleared away by German prisoners, advanced to within a mile of Thourout. The British Second Army pushed along the Lys and on the second day entered the burning ruins of Menin. The whole of that fateful Menin Road, which had seen some of the bitterest struggles of the war, was now in our hands. The British advance reached the northern suburbs of Courtrai. The enemy resistance was very uneven. Some divisions gave in at once, notably the dismounted cavalry, but two or three reserve divisions—Guards and Bavarians—put up a good fight. This advance had rapid and sensational results. It created two "pockets," one between Thourout and the sea, the other south of the Lys. The former loosened the German grip on the Belgian Coast and the latter led to a withdrawal from Lille.

Liberation of Lille. October 17th was a great day for the Allies. Before dawn the German Commandant at Lille assembled the inhabitants and paraded the garrison in the great Square. He told the people that they might go out to the west to meet their friends the British. Then he and his troops marched out to the east. Very few of the inhabitants took advantage of his permission: they preferred to wait for their friends to come to them. A little later in the morning a British airman, flying over the town, saw the streets surging with an excited crowd waving flags, handkerchiefs, shawls, in fact, anything that could be waved. He flew back to report. Meanwhile the inhabitants had a scare. They saw several hundred German soldiers marching from the east, and

thought they had changed their minds, and were coming to reoccupy the town. But it turned out that they were returning to surrender as prisoners. The British opposite Lille—the Fifth Army, now commanded by General Birdwood, of Anzac fame—did not march in at once; they waited for a French division to come up, that the French might have the honour and pleasure of being the first to enter Lille. “It was the act of gentlemen,” said M. Clemenceau. French and British were given a clamorous welcome by the overjoyed and excited populace. The correspondents on the scene had the kissing of their lives. General Birdwood presented the flag of the Fifth Army to the Mayor. Lille was—and will be again—one of the greatest industrial cities of France, a railway centre and the seat of the cotton trade. Nearly all the machinery in the great factories had been removed or smashed up during the German occupation. On the same day the First Army entered the blazing wreck of Douai, and on the 18th the manufacturing towns of Roubaix and Turcoing were occupied.

King Albert at Ostend. While the inhabitants of Lille were waving their tricoloured flags, an aviator brought news that the Germans had left Ostend. Shortly before noon Admiral Wemyss approached the harbour in a destroyer and landed in a whaler, meeting with a great reception from the crowd on the beach and the Belgian boys who had swarmed on to the half-submerged *Vindictive*. As the destroyer drew the fire of a heavy battery near Zeebrugge, the Admiral decided to steam away rather than give the Germans an excuse for bombarding the town. Later in the afternoon the King and Queen of the Belgians arrived at Ostend in the British destroyer *Termagant*, flying the Belgian flag, and proceeded to the Hotel de Ville, to the great joy of themselves and their devoted subjects. They returned to Dunkirk about 10 p.m. The Germans were now getting their guns away from Zeebrugge as fast as they could. On the 19th that danger-spot was occupied by the Belgians and the Germans no longer had their “pistol pointed at England’s head,” as Napoleon said of Antwerp. The whole of the Belgian coast was now clear of the enemy and Belgian cyclist-patrols were entering Bruges.

Battle of the Selle. When our advance guards reached Le Cateau they found the enemy occupying a strong entrenched position along the line of the Selle, and attempts to cross the river by the cavalry had to be abandoned. Nevertheless, the river was actually crossed at several points. “Some East Yorkshires,” says Mr. Beach Thomas, in one of his admirable descriptions, “who were to try its strength, found the enemy in force on the far side; but a sergeant said, ‘Over we go!’ and they rushed the river and found

on the far side a camouflaged trench full to the brim of fighting Germans. Them, too, they rushed and killed; and still bent on advancing, crossed some thick wire and met another line of enemy 800 yards farther on. Of these they killed and counted 80; and not yet satisfied, crossed the railway, where another forty were killed in close fighting." At another point the Manchesters crossed on planks supported on the shoulders of men standing almost neck-deep in the water! The points seized by these detachments could not be held against the flank-fire, and there was a pause of a week while our communications were put in order and troops moved up for the assault in force. This was made on October 17th by Rawlinson's Army on a front of ten miles south of Le Cateau, in conjunction with the First French Army. The battle lasted three days and resulted in the capture of the enemy positions and a big advance on the third day. On the 20th Byng's Army assaulted, crossed the Selle at all points and captured Solesmes. Three days later a combined attack by the three armies put the Germans to flight, and they were pursued for six miles across the open country. Many woods and villages were captured and the main railway was cut between Valenciennes and Hirson. In the Selle battle 24 British and 2 American divisions captured 20,000 prisoners and 475 guns from the 31 German divisions opposed to them. Many little industrial towns and villages had been liberated. The Germans had deliberately destroyed all the machinery for the purpose of ruining the trade of France, and looted all wearing apparel, household linen and clocks. Clocks have always had a peculiar fascination for the Germans—even in 1870 they could never resist a clock.

Franco-American Advance. Debeney's Army fought its way through the Forest of Andigny and was approaching Guise, but the Germans had flooded the valley of the Oise and held up further progress in that direction. Mangin had some hard fighting on the Serre, but he broke through the Hunding Line, while General Guillaumat destroyed and turned the eastern end at Sissonne. From Vouziers Gouraud made a rapid advance to Rethel and was now in the open country beyond. The Americans at last fought their way through the Argonne, and on October 16th they took Grandpré, an important railway centre on the River Aire. The Germans thought they would try to bridge the river, but they dashed through the icy cold water and soft mud-banks in face of a murderous machine-gun fire, and after five hours' fighting with bayonets and rifle-butts they had driven the enemy out of Grandpré and seized the railhead. The American left soon joined up with the French in a combined advance on the important Hirson-Mezières railway.

Peace Talk. It will not be out of place here to devote a paragraph to the "Peace Talk" that went on during the month of October. It was by no means the first attempt at bringing the war to an end. In the very early days, Mr. Henry Ford, of motor-car fame, had brought a "Peace Ship" across the Atlantic, but the delegates quarrelled among themselves and nothing came of it. Mr. Ford was now converted and devoting the resources of his vast works to making war material for the American Armies. The Pope had promulgated two Peace Notes, which found more favour with the Germans than with the Allies. The Germans themselves had opened more than one "Peace Offensive" with the view to a settlement by "arrangement" or "negotiation." But the Allies were firm in their conviction that there could be no peace in Europe till the war had been won, and Germany rendered powerless to start another war of aggression. President Wilson declared that there could be no peace with the Hohenzollerns. The cruel and uncivilised methods of German warfare strengthened the conviction that the only "arrangement" possible was that which a judge makes with a burglar—the only "negotiation" that of a schoolmaster with a disorderly pupil. In January, 1918, President Wilson enunciated his famous "Fourteen Points" for the consideration of the enemy. The principal points were the evacuation and restoration of all occupied territories, justice to Alsace-Lorraine, the adjustment of the Italian Frontier, and free government for the various Austrian nationalities. In short, the points insisted on the right of nations to choose their own governments.

The reverses of August and September must have convinced the Germans that they had no chance of winning the war and were well on the way to losing it. As the Hindenburg Line crumpled up, they saw themselves being pushed much faster than they could comfortably go, not only out of France, but out of Belgium. It is not surprising that their thoughts turned to an Armistice as the most convenient way of getting out of the mess in which they found themselves, with the least possible discomfort to themselves. Count Hertling was not considered the right man to "wangle" an Armistice, so he was dismissed, and Prince Max of Baden was appointed Chancellor in his stead. He was of the high Military Caste, and merely acted as the mouthpiece of the Kaiser. His first act was to announce to the Reichstag that he had sent a note to President Wilson, via Switzerland, asking him to arrange an armistice with the Allies with a view to discussing a peace on the basis of the Fourteen Points. "But," said Prince Max in his speech, Junker as he was, "our front is unbroken (!), and if our

offer is not accepted, the German army and people will resist to the last man." President Wilson did not pass the Note on to the Allies. In his reply he asked Prince Max two questions:—"Did the Germans accept the Fourteen Points!" and "For whom was he speaking?" In reply, Prince Max said (vaguely) that they did accept the Fourteen Points, and that he was speaking for a majority of the Reichstag. He asked for a "mixed commission" to supervise the evacuation of France and Belgium. It was generally considered in Allied Circles that a commission consisting of Marshal Foch, King Albert, Sir Douglas Haig and General Pershing was already supervising the evacuation very thoroughly and effectively. M. Clemenceau remarked that Prince Max had missed the President's Fifteenth Point:—"No peace with the Hohenzollerns." President Wilson's reply to the second Note was equivalent to the word "surrender." He also insisted that the atrocities committed by the Germans should be stopped. It was rather unfortunate for Prince Max's efforts that one of the worst yet committed should have happened during the exchange of Notes—the sinking of the Irish Mail Boat *Leinster* with the loss of 500 lives. However, the Prince tried again and told the President that he would be glad to hear the Allies' "proposals" for an armistice—as if the Allies were asking for it. The President's reply was brief and to the point:—the matter lay entirely with the Military Command, and if Prince Max wanted to know, he could apply in the proper form to Marshal Foch. Turkey and Austria sent similar Notes to President Wilson. For a short time the matter remained in abeyance. It was obvious to the Germans that an armistice meant complete surrender, and a section of their Press was already clamouring for the abdication of the Kaiser, who had failed them in war and now stood in the way of peace.

End of October. October was a month of astonishing success to the Allied Arms. The Hindenburg Line was now a thing of the past, "merely an unpleasant memory," as a French journalist puts it. St. Quentin, Cambrai, Laon, Lille, Douai had been regained and the Germans driven from the Belgian Coast. The British, French and American Armies were driving the enemy in confusion on to the southern frontier of Belgium, and his only hope now was a stand on the line of the Meuse, Antwerp—Namur—Verdun. Germany could no longer count on the support of Turkey and Austria—on the last day of the month the former was already out of the war and the latter on the verge of collapse. The "October Victories" which led to these results are reserved for the next chapter. Ludendorff could no longer keep up the fiction that he was organising victory, and on October 27th he resigned. The

German casualties during the month were enormous, and the men and guns could not be replaced. In prisoners alone they lost 108,000, with 2,000 guns. Since July 18th they had lost 362,000 prisoners, 6,000 guns, 38,000 machine-guns and 4,000 mine-throwers. No wonder they wanted an armistice !

CHAPTER VIII.

SURRENDER OF TURKEY AND AUSTRIA.

Damascus and Aleppo. Before dawn on October 1st Australian Mounted troops entered Damascus, the oldest inhabited city in the world. Another force pushed up the coast, and on the 7th occupied the seaport of Beirut ; the harbour had previously been entered by French warships. The inhabitants were overjoyed with their liberation from the Turks and expelled them from the city. Allenby's advance northwards was very rapid : there was nothing in the way but the 17,000 Turks who had so far escaped destruction and were flying towards Aleppo. On the 26th, outside Aleppo, they were caught up by two regiments of Indian Lancers, which charged and broke through the Turkish rearguard. "A number of Turks were speared and many threw down their arms, only to pick them up again when the cavalry had passed through." Next day our troops entered Aleppo, a city of 250,000 inhabitants, the capital and military base of Turkey-in-Asia. Cavalry rode out miles to the north and cut the Bagdad railway. The Turkish power in Asia was completely destroyed and the way was open to Constantinople.

Allenby's victory was one of the most decisive and overwhelming on record. It was chiefly due to the masterly use he made of his cavalry, and in his despatch he gives his cavalry well-deserved and lavish praise. They were led with consummate ability by Sir Philip Chetwode and Sir Harry Chauvel. Allenby had advanced 300 miles in five weeks ; some of the cavalry had ridden 500 miles in that time. The number of prisoners taken must have been well over 80,000. The Mounted Desert Corps alone accounted for 46,000. The help of the Arabs, east of the Jordan was invaluable. They were commanded by Prince Feisul, son of the King of the Hedjaz. His Chief of Staff was a young Englishman, Colonel Lawrence, who before the war was a civilian, writing a "History of the Crusades" in Palestine. He had adopted the manners, dress and speech of an Arab, and directed the blowing up of the Turkish troop-trains. No fewer than seventeen were destroyed in this way. One was the train of Djemal Pasha, who escaped with his life, but had to run for it. Colonel Lawrence was the

first of the Allies to enter Damascus. The Turks are said to have put a price of £17,000 on his head, if taken alive !

Victory on the Tigris. In the last week of October General Marshall achieved a great success on the Tigris. Operations commenced on the 24th. The Turks were driven from the Jebel Hamrin, and took up a strong position higher up the river ; but this was turned by Indian cavalry and armoured cars, and a further retirement was made to the spot where a tributary called the Lesser Zab flows into the Tigris. Here they held out for two days till driven to a third position at Shergat, thirty miles south of Mosul. They were cut off by Indian cavalry, so that no reserves could reach them, nor could they break through to the north. Finding his position hopeless, the Turkish Commander, Ismail Hakki, surrendered his whole force of 8,000 men. Scarcely had they been handed over when news was received that an Armistice had been granted to Turkey.

Surrender of Turkey. For months the Turks had seen that they had nothing to gain and everything to lose by continuing the war. Since the 19th of September Turkey's back had been breaking and the loss of Aleppo was the last straw. Enver, the War Minister, and Talaat, the Grand Vizier, had fallen from their high estate, and Tewfik Pasha, the new Grand Vizier, was anxious for peace. General Townshend was released, and sent to Admiral Calthorpe, our commander in the Mediterranean, to negotiate an armistice. The terms were settled at Mudros, and, as was to be expected, meant the complete surrender of Turkey. The Turks accepted the terms, and the Armistice came into force on October 31st. The chief terms were :—

- (1) The Dardanelles and the Bosphorus should be thrown open to the Allies.
- (2) The forts on the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus should be held by the Allies.
- (3) All mines were to be swept away.
- (4) Surrender of all war-vessels and shipping.
- (5) Immediate evacuation of all territory held outside Turkey.
- (6) Return of all prisoners at once.

So at last Turkey had fallen, a fitting judgment for her alliance with the enemies of Britain and France, her friends and protectors for a hundred years. "Single-handed Great Britain has conducted this 'side-show,' while fighting on seven other fronts," said the *Daily Mail*, "through defeat, through loss, to final victory, with that iron tenacity which has ever marked our people." And we must not forget that "Great Britain" means the "Empire," for Australians and Indian troops had taken a leading share in this

victorious struggle with Turkey. Gallipoli and Kut-el-Amara could now be looked back to as glorious steps on the path to victory, for the British Fleet was making ready to steam unmolested through the Dardanelles and occupy the harbour of Constantinople.

The Balkans. The surrender of Bulgaria had not altogether cleared the way for an advance to the Danube. The report that Von Mackensen was marching on Sofia at the head of an army of 200,000 men turned out to be a myth, but there were still Austrian and German troops in Albania and Serbia which offered a stiff resistance. The Italian Navy made an attack on Durazzo and destroyed the Austrian warships in the harbour, while their land forces advanced through the mountains. The Serbs got to Nish about the middle of October. By the 30th they were on the Danube and on November 1st recaptured Belgrade and were crossing the river into Hungary. Meanwhile the French had reached the Danube at Widin, in the bend of the river near the Serbian frontier. The Second Serbian Army was on the borders of Bosnia, joining up with the Jugo-Slavs. Already a "Greater Serbia" had been proclaimed at Serajevo, which included Bosnia and Herzegovina. The situation was full of danger for Austria, but it was nothing to what was happening on the Italian Front and in the Austrian Empire itself.

Great Italian Offensive. Early in October General Diaz thought the time had come for a big offensive against the Austrians. On the 6th the Earl of Cavan was requested to attend at "Comando Supremo" and was offered the command of the Italian Tenth Army, which he gladly accepted. A week later General Diaz held a conference of his army commanders and explained his plans. Our interest naturally centres in the Tenth Army, as it was commanded by a British General and contained a British Corps (the 7th and 23rd Divisions). The 48th Division was left on the Asiago Plateau. Lord Cavan took up his Headquarters at Treviso. The Tenth Army was drawn up ready to cross the Piave between Nervesa and Zenson. The fact that British troops were on the Piave was to be kept as a surprise for the Austrians. So it was arranged that not a single shot should be fired by a British gun till the general bombardment began, and that the British troops within sight of the enemy should wear Italian uniforms. On Lord Cavan's left was the Eighth Army—in the Montello district—and next to that the Twelfth Army. These three formed the Army Group of General Cavaglia. On the right, extending to the sea, was the "unbeaten" army of the Duke of Aosta.

The objective of the Tenth Army was the River Livenza, but it got much farther than that. Opposite the British Corps there

was a large island in the Piave bearing the attractive name of Grave di Papadopoli. It was three miles long and a mile broad, and was occupied by the Austrians as an advanced post. General Babington, the Corps Commander, suggested to Lord Cavan that it would be as well to seize this island before the general offensive began. Lord Cavan agreed, and the feat was admirably carried out, though the river was in flood and the main channel had to be crossed with the current running at something like ten miles an hour. Before daylight on October 24th (the anniversary of Caporetto) battalions of the Honourable Artillery Company and Welsh Fusiliers, wearing Italian hats and cloaks, were conveyed across by a fleet of little boats, each carrying six men and manned by two experienced boatmen, the whole under the direction of an Italian officer, Captain Odini, whom our men dubbed "The Admiral." The island garrison was surprised and overcome, and there our little force had to wait for three days and two nights under heavy shell-fire till the Italian armies joined in.

Across the Piave. At 11.30 p.m. on the 26th the great bombardment was opened and the British guns were at liberty to bark. Early next morning the British troops on the island crossed to the far bank, nearly up to their necks in the cold turbulent stream, and holding each other by the hand. Unfortunately many of them lost their footing and, burdened with their arms and equipment, were swept away and drowned. The Austrians resisted very stubbornly in their front line, but by night our men had formed a big bridgehead, and our Engineers were building bridges across the swollen stream. The Eighth Army effected a landing some seven miles higher up, and though many of the bridges were swept away, troops were soon pouring across by the thousand. The enemy now began to give way and made a fighting retreat to the line of the Monticano (a tributary of the Livenza), and here he offered his last serious resistance. The passage was forced and the Austrians driven out of their defences on the morning of the 30th. The Livenza was reached the same evening. The enemy was now in full flight and the Italian cavalry were chasing the fugitives over the Tagliamento.

Austria Asks for an Armistice. After two days' fighting, when the Austrians saw the battle going against them and there was every prospect of a disgraceful rout, they announced that, to save useless bloodshed, they were quite willing to stop fighting. Very different from their boastful bulletins when they were driving the Italians to the Piave exactly a year before! However, on the evening of the 29th an Austrian officer was seen coming forward with a white flag. He was merely a captain, and not being properly

accredited, was sent back. Next evening the Austrians tried again. This time General Von Weber was the messenger, with an imposing staff. He was received by General Badoglio and conveyed in a motor-car to "Comando Supremo." But the negotiations hung fire for several days and the great battle went on.

Caporetto Avenged. The great battle, strictly speaking, was now little more than a chase. The Tenth Army reached the Tagliamento on November 3rd, where an American regiment from Ohio, which was now attached to it, had its baptism of fire. Italian cavalry had got to Udine. Prisoners were being passed back in such numbers that the Italians hardly knew what to do with them. The cages had long since overflowed. The share of the British Corps alone was 28,000, with 219 guns. The Third Army had joined in and was pushing along the coast. The armies to the north had crossed the Livenza and were driving the Austrians into the mountains of Carnia and Cadore. The Quero defile was forced, Feltre captured and Monte Casen, a dominating height north-east of Quero, was seized, which cut the communications between the Austrian armies. The Fourth Army seized the heights in the Grappa district. On the Plateau the Austrians were swept far beyond Asiago. On November 1st our 48th Division stormed Monte Catz and by a rapid advance through the mountains had the honour of being the first British Division to set foot on enemy territory on the Western Front. In four days' fighting this division captured 20,000 prisoners and 500 guns. Among the captives were a Corps Commander and three generals of division. By the 4th the Austrian armies were all broken and scattered, flying anywhere for safety, or surrendering by tens of thousands.

Revolution in Austria. While her armies were suffering disasters almost unparalleled in the history of warfare, Austria herself was a prey to internal strife. In fact, the "Ramshackle Empire" at last fell to pieces. In Vienna the Imperial banner was lowered from the Parliament House, and the unfurling of a huge red flag was greeted with enthusiasm by thousands of the citizens. The Emperor Karl fled to his mountain castle of Godello, taking with him the Crown Jewels and a train-load of valuables. At Buda-Pesth, the unpopular Minister, Count Tisza, the instigator of the war, was shot dead in the street. Hungary declared her independence, and a National Council was formed with Count Karolyi as President. In Bohemia the Czecho-Slovaks threw off the Hapsburg yoke and proclaimed themselves a free nation. Galicia became two separate states with Cracow and Lemberg as capitals. The Jugo-Slavs of Bosnia and Herzegovina joined

"Greater Serbia." Troops on the way to the front refused to go, and backed up the people in their bid for freedom. Fiume fell into the hands of the Croats, who declared for Italy, and the Austrian fleet at Pola was handed over to the Committee of the Slavs.

Surrender of Austria. Before the armistice was signed the Italians had won the Trentino and sent a force by sea to Trieste, where the rejoicings were great. "*Italia irredenta*" was redeemed at last. "In this gigantic battle," says General Diaz, "fifty-one Italian, three British, two French and one Czecho-Slovak divisions and one American regiment participated against sixty-three Austro-Hungarian divisions. The enemy has left in our hands about 300,000 prisoners, and no fewer than 5,000 guns. Those that are uncaptured, forming the remnant of what was one of the most powerful armies in the world, are in disorder and without hope, returning along the valleys from which they descended with haughty assurance." Austria had to agree to a complete surrender, and the armistice came into effect at 3 p.m. on November 4th.

Terms of the Armistice. The principal terms of the Armistice were as follows:—

- (1) Immediate cessation of hostilities.
- (2) Free use of Austro-Hungarian territory and transport for operations against Germany.
- (3) Demobilisation of Austrian armies.
- (4) Evacuation of all territory invaded.
- (5) Repatriation of Allied prisoners of war.
- (6) Surrender of three battleships and a number of cruisers, destroyers and submarines.
- (7) Freedom of navigation to Allies up the Adriatic and Danube.

It will be noticed that the second clause was a serious menace to Germany.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FINAL VICTORY. SURRENDER OF GERMANY.

Battle of Valenciennes. History was made at a most amazing pace during the first eleven days of November. Never had the world seen such an overwhelming defeat of powerful armies and such a rapid downfall of mighty empires. We have already described the rout of the Austrian armies and the fall of the House of Hapsburg. We now come to the decisive victory over the German armies which prevented them from retiring undisturbed to the line of the Meuse, where they might have prolonged the war for the winter, and which led to their total surrender and the fall of the House of Hohenzollern.

On November 1st a big battle was opened by the right of Horne's Army and the left of Byng's on a six-mile front south of Valenciennes. "In the course of two days' heavy fighting," says Sir Douglas Haig, "a severe defeat was inflicted on the enemy." General Currie's Canadian Corps was well to the fore in this battle. The sluices of the canals had been opened and the country flooded, but the Fourth Canadian Division fought its way into Valenciennes. The town had been well looted, and the Germans had not forgotten the beautiful lace for which Valenciennes has always been so famous. The railway-station and sidings had been smashed up by our airmen, and the fact that none of the adjacent buildings were damaged is a testimony to the accuracy of their aim. Here, as in other towns and villages they were defending, the enemy had used gas in large quantities, regardless of the sufferings of the civilian population, many of whom died in agony. The Prince of Wales entered Valenciennes with our troops, and his presence was very cheering to the inhabitants. Our advance from Valenciennes turned the line of the Scheldt and led to the evacuation of the Tournai salient. To the south the enemy took up a defensive line running through Le Quesnoy to the Sambre.

Battle of the Sambre. The Germans were allowed no rest in their new position. On November 4th the decisive attack was delivered by the First, Third and Fourth Armies on a front of thirty miles south of Valenciennes. The chief obstacle in front of our right was the Sambre-Oise Canal, something like thirty yards broad. But our men were so eager to get the enemy on the run that it was crossed without delay by means of collapsible canoes and light bridges—the Cameron Highlanders were all across in six minutes! Other divisions pushed up the Sambre, captured Landrecies and fought their way to the middle of the Forest of Mormal. In the centre New Zealanders swept far to the east of Le Quesnoy and compelled the surrender of the German garrison in that fortified town. On the left the Canadians advanced five miles east of Valenciennes. "Twenty British divisions utterly defeated thirty-two German divisions and captured 19,000 prisoners and 450 guns." Next day we were well through the Forest of Mormal. On the 7th our Guards Division entered Bavai, and that night we got Condé, on the Canal which our Second Corps held at the Battle of Mons. The enemy's resistance was now definitely broken, and his troops, transport and material, scattered in confusion along the Belgian roads, could find no escape or protection from the destruction wrought by our Royal Air Force.

Guisse and Sedan. During the Battle of the Sambre, Debeney's Army kept line with our right, crossed the canal and carried Guise

by assault. The Hunding Line was left behind and the French armies were rapidly converging on the main railway running just south of the Belgian frontier, which was a vital line of communication to the enemy. It had already been cut by the British between Avesnes and Maubeuge. On the 7th Debeney was three miles from the important junction at Hirson, and Gouraud was six miles from Mezières.

A few miles south-east of Mezières is the town of Sedan, situated on the Meuse and the main railway line. Here it was that, on September 2nd, 1870, a French Army capitulated to the Germans and the Emperor Napoleon III. gave up his sword to the King of Prussia, who soon became Kaiser Wilhelm I. Neither Emperor nor Kaiser could foresee that this would be avenged and a final nail be driven into the coffin of Kaiserdom by an American Army fighting side by side with the French on November 6th, 1918. Yet so it was: on that day the Americans entered Sedan, intending to blow up the railway and river bridges, but the enemy anticipated them and saved the trouble. On the 7th the railway was of no further use to the Germans, who were being crowded back into the difficult country of the Ardennes, where they had no lines of transport or communication.

The White Flag. At last the Germans made up their minds to adopt the only expedient left to them: namely, to approach Marshal Foch in the conventional manner with a request for an armistice. They signified their intention by wireless on the night of Wednesday, November 6th, and asked how and where their plenipotentiaries could get through the lines. In reply, Marshal Foch indicated the route to be followed and said they would be allowed to enter the French lines at a spot between Fourmies and La Capelle, a few miles north-west of Hirson. About noon on Thursday there was a furious blowing of bugles opposite this spot and white flags were hoisted in the German lines. Firing was stopped, and a German officer emerged, accompanied by a sergeant carrying an enormous white flag, and a bugler blowing blasts on his instrument. He approached the French lines and after making arrangements for the reception of the envoys, returned. Towards evening flares and bonfires were lighted along the route. It was not till nine o'clock that the headlights of motor-cars were seen approaching. They were preceded by a gang of German navvies repairing the roads in front of them. The navvies were sent back, but the cars, each bearing a white flag, were admitted. The occupants were Secretary of State Erzberger, Count Obendorff, General von Winterfeldt, a Naval Captain and their attendants. They were blindfolded and transferred to French cars which took

them to Guise, whence they proceeded by train to Compiègne. They were lodged for the night in the Château of Francport. Early next morning they were taken to the Headquarters of Marshal Foch, who had with him Admiral Wemyss and General Weygand. After their credentials had been examined and found correct, the Marshal read to them the terms of the Armistice. He gave them 72 hours to decide—that is, till eleven o'clock on the Monday morning. The so-called plenipotentiaries professed to be astonished at the terms, and said certain clauses must be referred to the High Command before they could sign. A courier, Captain Helldorf, was despatched to Spa with a copy of the terms. When he arrived at the lines he was held up by what seemed like heavy firing from the German guns. The French offered him an aeroplane, but when it was discovered that the Germans were only exploding their dumps preparatory to a fresh retreat, he was able to proceed on his way.

Revolution in Germany. We will take advantage of this pause in the Armistice proceedings to look behind the enemy lines and see what had been happening in Germany. The resignation or dismissal of Ludendorff had brought home to the people the conviction that they had lost the war. They could not stand the strain of a defeat, and as they had clamoured for Paris they now clamoured for Peace. The Kaiser, not feeling happy among his people at Berlin, sought safety at Army Headquarters at Spa. On November 3rd the German Fleet was ordered out. The officers were brave and patriotic enough, but the crews refused to go, and the red flag of rebellion was hoisted at Kiel. The sailors seized control of the ships and the harbour, and Prince Heinrich had to escape in a motor car, wearing a red armlet, which did not save him from being fired at by the sailors. The revolt spread to the other naval ports. Sailors flocked to Berlin and stirred up the Socialists. The moderates wished for a peaceful revolution, and tried to keep Berlin in order, but the extremists (Bolshevists) were out for blood and plunder. There was some fighting in the streets of the capital, but most of the troops declared for the revolutionists, and there was little resistance except at the barracks of the "Cockchafers." Berlin was soon in the hands of the mob and the red flag was flying on the Imperial Palace and the Brandenburg Gate. A general strike was declared if the Kaiser did not abdicate, and the Socialist Ministers threatened to leave the Government. Munich had already led the way. King Ludwig was deposed and Bavaria proclaimed a republic. Soldiers, sailors and workmen's councils were formed after the manner of the Russian Soviets. Hamburg, Frankfort, Cologne, Leipzig, Essen

and other large towns went over to the reds. Prince Max resigned and the Reichstag appointed Deputy Ebert, a saddler of Heidelberg, Chancellor. Ebert was now the ruler of Germany, but he had to face a deadly struggle with the notorious Liebknecht, the leader of the Bolsheviks, or "Spartacists," as they called themselves.

Abdication of the Kaiser. The last act of Prince Max was to announce that the Kaiser had abdicated and the Crown Prince renounced his right of succession to the throne. After signing his abdication "with a shivering hand" on Saturday, November 9th, 1918, at Spa, the Kaiser fled to Holland. The story of his flight is differently told. Partly by train, partly by motor-cars—any number from two to ten—almost alone, surrounded by a numerous staff, cheered and hooted, cheerful and depressed, he was reported to have reached Middachten Castle, the residence of Count Bentinck; but it turned out to be the Castle of Amerongen, belonging to another Count of the same name. The Crown Prince, after many violent deaths (in the newspapers), arrived safe and sound at a lonely island on the Frisian Coast, where he divided his time between playing billiards at the village café and bribing the children with sweets to give him a cheer.

Wilhelm Hohenzollern did not abdicate alone. The minor sovereigns of Germany were falling like ninepins. Ludwig of Bavaria was already down. The Kings of Saxony and Wurtemberg and the Grand-Dukes of most of the smaller states, finding public opinion too much for them, resigned their jobs and retired into private life. The German Empire had ceased to exist.

Rout of the German Armies. There was no pause in the fighting. The envoys requested a cessation of hostilities while they were thinking over the terms of the Armistice, but Marshal Foch replied with a decided refusal. Those three days completed the rout of the German armies. On the 8th we captured Avesnes, and on the 9th the Guards Division entered Maubeuge. Our First, Second and Fifth Armies were across the Scheldt. On the 10th the Canadians were advancing on Mons. Cavalry and cyclists rode far ahead of the infantry: that night they reached Ath (twelve miles north of Mons), which was captured by King Edward's Horse and the East Lancshires. The Belgians occupied Ghent. The French had captured Hirson and Mezières, crossed the railway and were driving the enemy over the Belgian border at every point. Hardly a German remained in France. "The enemy," says Sir Douglas Haig, "was capable neither of accepting nor refusing battle. The utter confusion of his troops, the state of his railways, congested with abandoned trains, the capture of huge quantities of rolling-stock and material, all showed that our attack had been decisive."

Surrender of Germany. Late on the Sunday Captain Helldorf arrived at Compiègne, and the German envoys, after a discussion lasting all night, signed the Armistice at five o'clock in the morning of Monday, November 11th. It was not to come into operation till eleven. The Canadians were determined to have Mons. This was the only place where the enemy was still offering serious resistance, but in spite of the machine-gun fire, the Third Canadian Division stormed the town, killing or capturing all the defenders. The news of the armistice reached the firing-line about eight o'clock. The troops were ordered to stand firm on the positions they occupied at eleven, and hold no communication with the enemy. The difficulty was to warn the cavalry patrols scouring the country for miles around, but this was done in time. At eleven o'clock the bugles sounded the "Cease Fire," and the greatest war of all time was at an end.

CHAPTER X.

THE ARMISTICE.

Terms of the Armistice. That the Germans were completely beaten is proved by the conditions of the Armistice, to which they would never have consented if they had been capable of offering any further resistance. Briefly stated, they were as follows:—

Evacuation of invaded countries within fourteen days.

Repatriation of inhabitants of invaded countries.

Germans to surrender 5,000 guns, 30,000 machine-guns, 3,000 minenwerfer and 2,000 aeroplanes.

German armies to retire across the Rhine within thirty-one days.

A neutral zone of ten kilometres on the right bank to be set up from Dutch frontier to Swiss frontier, and bridgeheads of a radius of thirty kilometres on right bank at Mainz, Coblenz and Cologne.

No damage or destruction in territory evacuated.

Surrender of 5,000 locomotives, 150,000 waggons and 5,000 motor-lorries in good working order.

All mines and delay-action fuses to be revealed.

Upkeep of troops in occupation of Rhineland to be charged to German Government.

Repatriation of all prisoners of war.

Treaties of Bucharest and Brest-Litovsk to be annulled.

Restitution of Russian and Roumanian gold.

All submarines to be handed over within fourteen days.

Surrender of ten Battleships, six Battle-Cruisers, eight Light-Cruisers and fifty Destroyers (for internment).

Black Sea ports to be evacuated and Allies to have free access to Baltic Sea.

A note was inserted, at the suggestion of Admiral Wemyss, that if the surrender of the fleet could not be complied with owing to the mutiny in the German Fleet, the Allies reserved the right to occupy Heligoland. The clause the Germans objected to most was the one about the surrender of locomotives and waggons. A strong protest was made by Dr. Solf, the Foreign Secretary, who said the loss of transport would mean the starvation of Germany. The Allies undertook to see that Germany did not starve, and it was discovered afterwards that the reports of lack of food were exaggerated.

Rejoicings and Thanksgivings. Needless to say, the news of the Armistice was received with a spontaneous outburst of rejoicing. Flags waved from every house and no one thought of work that day. In London the first impulse of the huge crowd was to throng to Buckingham Palace to cheer the King. Shouts of "We want the King!" were repeated from thousands of throats, and when the King and Queen appeared on the balcony the loyal ovation they received was enthusiastic and deafening. Later in the day their Majesties drove through London, everywhere receiving the rapturous acclamations of the delighted crowd. The rejoicings were kept up all through the week, but unfortunately developed into sheer "mafficking." A bonfire lighted in Trafalgar Square, and fed with the German guns from the Mall, cracked the plinth of the Nelson monument. A more solemn outlet for the expression of the national feeling was provided by the Thanksgiving Services held throughout the country and the singing of that wonderfully appropriate psalm beginning, "If the Lord Himself had not been on our side."

U Boats at Harwich. Considering the breakdown of authority in Germany and the mutiny in the fleet, the naval conditions of the Armistice were complied with in quite a satisfactory manner. The U Boats were to arrive at Harwich in batches of twenty a day till all were surrendered. The crews were at first rather nervous about coming to England, but their own Government insured their lives for £500 each, and on receiving an assurance from our Naval Command that they had nothing to fear and would immediately be sent back to Germany, they consented to come. A rendezvous was fixed about seventy miles N.E. of Harwich, and punctually at 7.30 a.m. on November 20th the first consignment of twenty arrived there. A Destroyer Flotilla of Admiral Tyrwhitt's Squadron met them and escorted them towards the harbour. At a point arranged they were taken over by British crews and the White Ensign hoisted on each of them. By order of the Admiral there was no cheering or demonstration, nor was there any attempt at

friendliness with the German crews, who were sent off in motor-launches to two transports waiting to take them back to Germany. For several days this ceremony was repeated till all the U Boats available had been gathered in. Some of them were ocean cruisers of the *Deutschland* class, mounting big guns, but they were very dirty and pervaded by a strong smell of cabbage.

Surrender of the German Fleet. On November 15th Vice-Admiral Von Meurer crossed the North Sea in the Light Cruiser *Königsberg* to receive instructions for the surrender of the German ships. He was accompanied by delegates of the Soldiers and Sailors' Council. One of them was a leading seaman and another a "torpedo-engineer's mate." On arriving off the Firth of Forth he was met by the fast Destroyer *Oak* and conveyed to Rosyth, the delegates being left behind on the *Königsberg*. Von Meurer spent the night on the Flagship *Queen Elizabeth* and departed next morning with Admiral Beatty's instructions.

On the 20th the King, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, reviewed the Grand Fleet, steaming round in the *Oak*. It was the eve of "Der Tag," the day on which the German Fleet was to come to the shores of Britain. Soon after midnight the Grand Fleet weighed anchor and put to sea. It was an imposing sight as our ships steamed out of the Firth of Forth in the early morning. There were five British Battle Squadrons, two squadrons of Battle Cruisers, six of Light Cruisers and eight Destroyer Flotillas. In addition there was an American Battle Squadron and some French Warships. The crews were at action stations, the guns ready to be trained and fired at a moment's notice, if the Germans tried on any tricks. Overhead were airships and seaplanes. It was not till 9.30 that the Germans came in sight—they were only doing ten knots. They had to pass between the two lines of the British Fleet—six miles apart—at intervals of 600 yards. They were led by the British cruiser *Cardiff* and one of our airships. First came the Battle Cruisers *Seydlitz* (flying the Commodore's pennant), *Hindenburg*, *Derfflinger*, *Von der Thann*. Four of these we had seen before; the *Hindenburg* was new. Then came nine battle-ships: *Friedrich der Grosse* (Admiral's flag), *König Albert*, *Kaiser*, *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, *Kaiserin*, *Bayern*, *Markgraf*, *Prinz Regent Luitpold* and *Grosser Kurfürst*, followed by seven Light Cruisers (all quite new) and fifty destroyers. The Battleship *König* (laid up for repairs) and Battle Cruiser *Von Mackensen* (unfinished) were left behind by Beatty's permission. The Allied ships swung round and accompanied the German ships to the Firth of Forth. The German ships looked very imposing in the distance, but did not bear a close inspection. Coal dust, dirt, rust, stuffiness and a

powerful odour of German cooking were much in evidence. There was a lack of discipline on board ; the crews lounged about sullenly and took no notice of their officers. At sunset the German flags were hauled down, not to be hoisted again without permission. The ships were afterwards interned at Scapa Flow in the Orkneys, and the crews sent home in transports. Admiral Browning, in the *Hercules*, went to Germany with a Commission to see about the *Mackensen* and *König* and superintend the disarming of the ships in German ports.

Repatriation of Prisoners. The military conditions of the Armistice were not carried out quite so well ; one, at least, was carried out very badly. The German idea of repatriating prisoners of war seems to have been to open the doors and tell them they could go. Most of the poor fellows had suffered severely during their captivity from ill-treatment and lack of nourishing food, and were in no condition to face the fatigue and exposure of a winter tramp to France or Belgium. Scantily clad and faint with hunger, many of them succumbed by the way, and others reached the frontier more dead than alive. The excuse for this neglect was the general disorder of transport in Germany. The German soldiers, more or less demobilised and anxious to get to the big towns to take part in the revolution, had commandeered the available trains, and even forced engine-drivers to change their destinations. Many a tunnel could tell a ghastly tale of soldiers swept from the crowded roofs of railway carriages. The revolution still went on ; it had developed into a struggle between the Moderates and the Extremists. The rattle of machine-guns was frequently heard in the streets of Berlin ; the Spartacists seized and fortified the Castle, and Liebknecht was sleeping in the ex-Kaiser's bed.

Antwerp and Brussels. On November 13th King Albert rode into Ghent. On the 19th he entered Antwerp with the Queen and drove through the streets to the pealing of bells and the acclamations of the inhabitants. Correspondents who visited Antwerp at this time were surprised to find the city and the people so prosperous. There was no lack of food, or even of luxuries, though everything was very dear. The German soldiers, before the evacuation of Antwerp, Brussels and other large towns had got out of all control, and not only refused to obey their officers, but made them tear off their badges of rank. They sold everything they had no further use for to the highest bidder. Rifles and machine-guns were going for a few shillings ; iron crosses and aeroplanes were a drug in the market.

Brussels was occupied on the 19th. Two days before that, almost before the last German soldier had left the city, a well-known

figure had returned to his home. This was M. Max, the worthy Burgomaster, whose patriotism had earned for him four years in a German prison without breaking his spirit. Finding himself free, he hastened back by any means of conveyance he could secure, and, just as he was, his first act was to address the citizens in the Great Square. King Albert rode into his capital on November 25th. No police or soldiers were required to line the streets, as the dense and happy crowd respectfully made way for their restored Sovereign to pass.

Alsace-Lorraine. The French were given a cordial welcome by the inhabitants of the lost provinces, Alsace and Lorraine, regained after forty-eight years. Metz was entered by the Tenth Army, the army which had fought its way to Laon, but its commander, General Mangin, was not with it. He was suffering from a fall from his horse. This was a great disappointment, as General Mangin was a native of Metz. But Marshal Pétain was there: he had received the highest honour the day before, that he might enter Metz as a Marshal. Mounted on a white charger, at the foot of the statue of Marshal Ney, he watched the march-past of the troops. A little later he received his baton at Metz from the hands of President Poincaré, in the presence of M. Clemenceau, Marshal Joffre, Marshal Foch, Sir Douglas Haig and General Pershing. General de Castelnau, Commander of the Eastern Army Group, took up his Headquarters at Colmar. This veteran general, who saved France in 1914, had lost three sons in the war. Contrary to expectation, he was not made a Marshal. Strasburg was entered by Gouraud's Army on the 24th. Marshal Foch arrived the next day. The same old tricolour was hoisted on the citadel which had floated there in 1870, and the statue of Strasburg in the Place de la Concorde in Paris, which had been veiled in black for forty-eight years, was uncovered and half-smothered with flowers.

Allies on the Rhine. On Sunday, November 17th, the British Army began its march to the Rhine. At times detachments had to be sent on ahead, at the request of the local authorities, to restore order. The people were very war-weary. They were quiet and inclined to be friendly: the only disturbances were noisy demonstrations by rough lads of the baser sort. British Lancers arrived at the outskirts of Cologne on December 6th. The city, one of the most important in Germany, has a population of half a million, and is noted for its Cathedral and its scent. The people welcomed order in the streets once more after the recent disturbances, and our men found comfortable billets and plenty of food. On the whole the citizens showed no ill-feeling, and German bands played French tunes in the cafés. On the 11th General Plumer arrived,

and the Cavalry proceeded to cross the Rhine and occupy the bridgehead of nineteen miles radius on the far bank. For two hours the long procession—Lancers, Dragoons, Hussars and Horse Artillery—passed over the Hohenzollern Bridge. General Plumer, mounted on his horse and accompanied by an escort of Lancers with red and white pennons, took the salute as the cavalry rode past. On either side a statue of a former Kaiser looked down on British soldiers crossing the Rhine. Shortly afterwards the Americans occupied the bridgehead at Coblenz and the French did the same at Mainz.

CHAPTER XI.

SUMMARY, 1918.

Annus Mirabilis. Surely the world has never seen such a year as 1918. At the end of March the great World War had been raging for three years and eight months, and no one could see the end. It was an anxious time for the Allies. Russia and Roumania had dropped out. The Germans had struck a heavy blow on the Western Front and the British Armies were exhausted with a fighting retreat. The Italian Armies had recently been driven back and were holding a defensive line in their own country. A large Allied force was apparently doing nothing at Salonika. There was no progress in Palestine or Mesopotamia. The seas were infested by enemy submarines. London was in nightly expectation of a Gotha raid, and Big Bertha was hurling shells into Paris. In the middle of July the situation was no better. The British had lost ground in Flanders and the Germans were crossing the Marne. Who could have foreseen or expected in those dark days that before the end of the year the Allied Armies would be on the Rhine, the German Fleet interned at Scapa Flow and the Kaiser a refugee in Holland? On July 18th came the turn of the tide, when Foch forced the Germans from the Marne. On August 8th Haig struck out from Amiens, and on the 21st began the Battle of Bapaume, which developed into a great offensive from King Albert's Armies in Flanders to the Americans at St. Mihiel. Then came the capture of St. Quentin and Cambrai and the break-up of the Hindenburg Line. The Allies pressed on and victory came in sight. Each day added to the discomfiture of the Germans, and only the Armistice saved them from the total destruction of their armies and the invasion of their country.

Sea Power. In the preceding paragraph there is no mention of our Navy. But our Navy had won the war; or in other words, the war could not have been won without our Sea Power. Without

our Navy Britain would have been starved, no armies could have been transported to fight abroad at all, nor could the Americans have been brought across the Atlantic to help in the final victory. Our Navy was denied its big sea-fight, but all through the year it was doing its silent work. The effect produced by the Battle of Jutland was greater than we imagined at the time, and the awe inspired by the British Fleet on that occasion was kept alive by our activities in the Bight, where over a hundred enemy small surface boats were destroyed during the summer. The *prestige* of the British Navy had the same effect as a decisive victory, for when the crucial moment came, the German sailors refused to come out and fight, and the second largest navy in Europe was rendered impotent without the loss of a single ship or man.

The King. When we sang "God save the King" during the war, the words had quite a new meaning for us, particularly the second verse, which some people objected to in peace time. The National Anthem brought home to us the fact that the King and the British Empire are one; that "God save the King" and "God save us all" are the same. To praise a King is to incur the suspicion of flattery, so we will quote the opinion of a democratic evening paper, which cannot be suspected of flattery. "The King has played the game," it said, and this simple expression means more to a Briton than columns of adulation. The King did not spare himself during the war; he did his duty—and it was a duty that only he could do—as conscientiously and efficiently as any of our commanders in the field or our workers at home. Many a time did he visit his armies at the front, to cheer them in the dark days of retreat and congratulate them in the hour of victory. Soon after the Armistice he had a great welcome in Paris, in company with the Prince of Wales and Prince Albert, and there was a touching scene at the British Embassy when he decorated Marshal Foch with the Order of Merit—"the highest honour he could bestow." The King and Princes afterwards made a tour of the battle-fields, not forgetting Ypres, where the villages in the battle area were now merely names, the woods a few blasted stumps of trees, and the town itself a heap of stones. Queen Mary's devotion to the welfare of the fighting forces and war workers was unceasing, and the Prince of Wales won golden opinions everywhere he went during his four years at the front.

Leaders of Men. On the occasion of the presentation of a congratulatory address by both Houses of Parliament in the Royal Gallery of the Palace of Westminster, the King delivered a stirring message to his people. After paying a tribute to the services of the Navy and Army and the devotion of India and the Colonies, he

mentioned Sir Douglas Haig, "whose patient and indomitable leadership has been rewarded by the final rout of the enemy on the field of so much sacrifice and glory"; General Allenby, "who has won back for Christendom the spoil for which centuries fought and bled in vain"; and Generals Maude and Marshall, "who gained, in a scene of no less romance, the first resounding victory of the war for the allied cause." Nor did he forget to allude to the services of Lord French of Ypres, Lord Jellicoe and Sir David Beatty, and last but not least "one of the greatest of commanders," Marshal Foch. The capital of England had the privilege of welcoming some of the great men of the war before the end of the year. First of all came Marshal Foch, M. Clemenceau (driving with Mr. Lloyd George), and the Italian Statesmen, Signor Salandria and Baron Sonnino. Shortly afterwards Sir Douglas Haig and his army commanders (Generals Plumer, Rawlinson, Horne, Byng and Birdwood) drove through London to lunch with the King at Buckingham Palace. On Boxing Day President Wilson arrived in London, and had a great reception as he drove to Buckingham Palace with the King, followed by the Queen with Princess Mary and Mrs. Wilson.

Cavalry and Tanks. In the three years of trench warfare the brunt of the fighting was borne by the infantry and artillery, and it seemed that the days of cavalry were numbered. But in the open fighting of 1918 cavalry came into its own again, and proved that, when capably led, the "arme blanche" is a saving grace in a retreat and a deciding factor in a victory. The work of the Cavalry on the Western Front was highly praised by Sir Douglas Haig; and the campaigns in the Balkans, Palestine and Mesopotamia were decided by the dash of the horsemen when a way had been opened for them by the infantry. It is a significant fact that most of our army commanders were cavalymen:—Lord French, Haig, Allenby, Byng and Gough. Rawlinson was a Guardsman and Horne a Gunner. One of the above, General Gough, dropped out rather suddenly. After the Great Retreat he was recalled to England and not employed again. The reason was not made public and many people thought he had been badly treated.

Tanks were a very important factor in the success of our great offensive. Four hundred tanks went into action to clear the way for Rawlinson's advance on August 8th, and they created so much consternation that the Germans were ever after afraid of them. Indeed, the very sight of a tank produced such an effect that when real tanks were not available, dummy tanks—monstrous theatrical properties—were sent into action with quite good results. The Germans never mastered the art of tank fighting, either in dealing with ours or managing their own ponderous machines.

But however great the services of cavalry, artillery, engineers, air-men and tanks, the good old "foot-sloggers" will always be the backbone of the army.

Some Statistics. The total casualties of the armies fighting in the war were as follows :—

Great Britain	Killed,	658,000.	Wounded,	2,032,000.
France	"	1,000,000.	"	—
Italy	"	460,000.	"	947,000.
United States	"	58,000.	"	190,000.
Russia	"	1,600,000.	"	5,000,000.
Germany	"	1,600,000.	"	4,064,000.
Austria	"	800,000.	"	3,000,000.

The French did not issue casualty lists, and some of the others are only approximate.

In 1918, on the Western Front 3,060 enemy aeroplanes were destroyed in aerial combat by the British, and 1,174 driven down out of control. The British lost 1,318 aeroplanes. The British took over 200,000 prisoners and about 3,000 guns. Nearly 5,500 tons of bombs were dropped by the R.A.F. on objectives of military importance behind the German lines.

Spirit of the Allies. One of the most remarkable things about the war is that Germany and Austria were defeated without ever being seriously invaded ; for four years Berlin and Vienna were not even threatened. The Central Empires simply broke themselves to pieces in trying to impose their armed will on Europe, and with the collapse of their armies came the downfall of their rulers. The spirit of the Allies was very different. They were fighting for freedom and security, for their hearths and homes. Brussels, Belgrade, Bucharest and Warsaw were occupied by the enemy. But King Albert held out valiantly in a little corner of his kingdom, and is now once more at Brussels, as popular as ever. Old King Peter returned to Belgrade as King of a Greater Serbia. The King of Roumania reigns again at Bucharest. The Russians endured invasion for over two years before the revolution broke out and the Tsar, like Charles I. and Louis XVI., paid the penalty for the faults of his ancestors and the failings of an alien wife. The King of Italy has been acclaimed at Trieste and the lost provinces have been restored to France as a reward for four years of suffering and sacrifice. Last of all, the British Empire has been knit together more firmly than ever, and that wonderful scene in Hyde Park when the King reviewed the "Silver-badge" men was an eloquent testimony to the loyalty and devotion of those who had fought in the war.

Conclusion. The war has been won and the main conditions of the armistice have been fulfilled; and here our short history must end. The deplorable events in Russia during the last four months of the year and the spread of Bolshevism in Germany do not come within the scope of this volume. Nor can we wait for the Peace Conference, the League of Nations and the Trial of the Kaiser. One thing we must mention, however, that Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition Ministry, which had won the war, was returned at a General Election in December, by an overwhelming majority, to win the peace. By way of conclusion, we cannot do better than quote the peroration of the King's great speech to his people. "May goodwill and concord at home strengthen our influence for concord abroad. May the morning star of peace which is now rising over a war-worn world be here and everywhere the herald of a better day, in which the storms of strife shall have died down, and the rays of an enduring peace be shed upon all the nations."

PRINCIPAL DATES.

1914.
 July 28. Austria declares War on Serbia.
 Aug. 1. Germany declares War on Russia.
 „ 2. Germans invade France.
 „ 3. Germans invade Belgium.
 „ 4. Britain declares War on Germany.
 „ 7. Fall of Liège.
 „ 22. Battle of Charleroi.
 „ 23. Battle of Mons.
 „ 26. Battle of Tannenberg.
 „ 28. Battle of the Bight.
 Sept. 2. Russians take Lemberg.
 „ 6. Battle of the Marne.
 „ 12. Battle of the Aisne.
 Oct. 9. Fall of Antwerp.
 „ 21. First Battle of Ypres.
 Nov. 1. Battle of Coronel.
 Dec. 8. Battle of the Falkland Islands.

1915.
 Jan. 24. Battle of the Dogger Bank.
 Feb. 25. Attack on the Dardanelles.
 Mar. 10. Battle of Neuve Chapelle.
 „ 22. Russians take Przemyśl.
 Apr. 22. Second Battle of Ypres.
 „ 25. Landing in Gallipoli.
 May 7. Sinking of *Lusitania*.
 „ 12. Battle of the San.
 „ 23. Italy declares War on Austria.
 Aug. 4. Fall of Warsaw.
 „ 6. Landing at Suvla Bay.
 Sept. 25. Battle of Loos.
 „ Battle of Champagne.
 „ 28. Battle of Kut-el-Amara.

Nov. 5. Fall of Nish.
 „ 22. Battle of Ctesiphon.
 Dec. 5. Fall of Monastir.

1916.
 Feb. 21. First Battle of Verdun.
 Apr. 29. Fall of Kut.
 May 9. Second Battle of Verdun.
 „ 31. Battle of Jutland.
 June 5. Lord Kitchener drowned.
 July 1. Battle of the Somme.
 Aug. 9. Italians take Gorizia.
 Oct. 24. Third Battle of Verdun.
 Nov. 13. Battle of the Ancre.
 Dec. 6. Fall of Bucharest.
 „ 7. Mr. Lloyd George Prime Minister.

1917.
 Feb. 24. Recapture of Kut.
 Mar. 11. Capture of Bagdad.
 „ 12. Revolution in Russia.
 „ 16. Germans retreat to Hindenburg Line.
 „ 26. Failure at Gaza.
 Apr. 6. United States declare War on Germany.
 „ 9. Battle of Arras. Vimy Ridge taken.
 „ 16. Nivelle's Aisne Offensive.
 June 7. Messines Ridge taken.
 July 1. Brusiloff's last Offensive.
 „ 31. Third Battle of Ypres.
 Aug. 20. Fourth Battle of Verdun.
 Oct. 22. Battle of Malmaison.
 „ 24. Caporetto. Italian retreat to the Piave.
 Nov. 6. Capture of Passchendaele.
 „ 20. Battle of Cambrai.
 Dec. 9. Jerusalem occupied.

1918.		
Mar.	3.	Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.
„	21.	Great German Offensive
Apr.	9.	Battle of the Lys.
„	22.	<i>Vindictive</i> at Zeebrugge.
May	9.	<i>Vindictive</i> at Ostend.
„	27.	German advance to the Marne.
June	20.	Austrians beaten on the Piave.
July	18.	German Retreat from the Marne.
Aug.	8.	Battle of Amiens.
„	21.	Battle of Bapaume.
Sept.	2.	Wotan Line broken.
„	12.	Battle of St. Mihiel.
„	17.	Allied victory in Balkans
„	19.	Battle of Armageddon.
„	27.	Hindenburg Line broken
Sept.	29.	Surrender of Bulgaria.
„	30.	Capture of Damascus.
Oct.	1.	Capture of St. Quentin.
„	9.	Capture of Cambrai.
„	17.	Ostend and Lille recovered.
„	26.	Capture of Aleppo.
„	28.	Great Italian victory.
„	31.	Surrender of Turkey.
Nov.	1.	Capture of Valenciennes.
„	4.	Surrender of Austria.
„	6.	Americans at Sedan.
„	9.	Abdication of the Kaiser
„	11.	Canadians at Mons.
		Armistice signed.
		Surrender of Germany.
„	21.	German Fleet handed over.
Dec.	6.	Allies on the Rhine.

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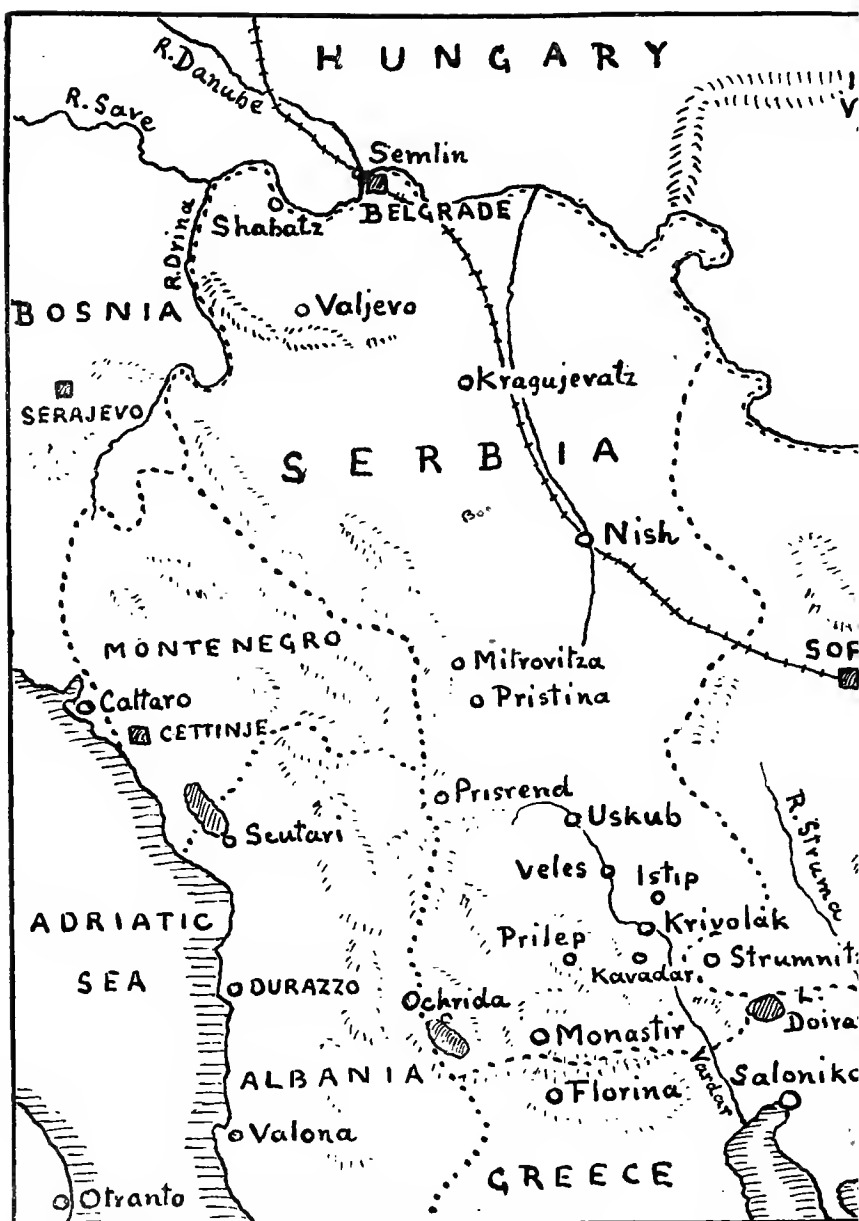
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